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Reject Criminalization of Dissent : 5-11



ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT

Organize to Build the New and Refuse to Remain Stuck in the Old

Campaigning for the 2018 elections has already begun, while many are also talking about the 2020 presidential elections. “We must have a big name to defeat Trump,” with Michele Obama, Oprah, Joe Biden and Cuomo among

those mentioned. “We must support the Democrats,” “We can not split the vote,” “Voting third party is a wasted vote, we have to chose someone who can win” are other ways the pressure to remain

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Reject Criminalization of Dissent by Stepping Up the Fight for Rights

An important part of the government’s use of arbitrary police powers is its criminalization of dissent. While efforts to silence dissent through police actions against demonstrators has long taken place, including use of tear gas and

arrests, the present period has seen more frequent collective punishment of protesters and organizations. It is also being extended to social media, with the server that hosted one of the inauguration protest

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END SANCTIONS AND SIGN A PEACE TREATY NOW

U.S. is the Nuclear Threat in Korea

The U.S. continues its crimes against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Korean people as a whole. Unending massive war games continue to take place, including “practice” runs for use of nuclear

weapons and placing three aircraft carriers and their multi-ship strike forces and bombers in the area. Consider the terrorism of such a massive show of force, presence of troops and repeated “practice” bomb-

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www.usmlo.org • office@usmlo.org • 716-602-8077
3942 N. Central Ave, Chicago, IL 60634

I • Elections and Building the New

stuck in the old occur. Everyone is to start with the old, with the rotten and rigged electoral system that currently exists. Despite repeated experience that the current set-up, whoever wins, delivers pro-war, anti-people and anti-social results, we are still to accept it as a given. Doing so guarantees that there is not even discussion about the new — even though many readily agree that what exists is rigged against the interests of the people. We are faced with a dysfunctional Congress, again threatening to shut down government and an electoral process that produced the two most hated candidates. We are supposedly to think one thing, that the system is rigged, but do another — continue to participate in it anyway, knowing it is rigged. Bringing new people or better ideas to a rigged game only guarantees that we continue to lose.

Instead it is necessary to start with the necessity for change, the necessity to refuse to accept the old and begin building the new. And central to that new is political empowerment of the people. The content of *Who Decides, We Decide!* must be addressed. This is true for who decides the platform — *We Decide!* Who decides the candidates — *We Decide!* Who decides the character of the process — *We Decide!* By using the guideline that decision making must be in the hands of the people, steps to build the new can be taken today.

For example, discussion among the people — whether on campuses or at workplaces or conferences — on the need for a platform that supports an antiwar government and peace economy is valuable. Popularizing such content, demanding that candidates support it, identifying our own candidates based on such support, is all in our hands to organize. It does not depend on the rich. It does not focus solely on getting elected, which entrenches us back in the old. It does serve a key aim of raising the quality of political discussion among the people and providing a political atmosphere and public arena for such discussion. Whether a given candidate wins or loses, advancing on such an aim is a significant accomplishment.

Further, popularizing the need for an antiwar government and



peace economy brings these key questions to the fore. The threat of war and the militarization of life impacts all major issues, like the environment, education, inequality. The Pentagon is the single largest polluter and consumer of oil and thus a major cause of environmental and human destruction, as are the wars it wages. The massive funding of the war machine blocks funding for rights to education, housing, healthcare, jobs. U.S. aggression harms relations with the peoples worldwide, while an antiwar stand contributes to peace and relations of mutual respect

and benefit. It is preparation for war that is a main factor behind the testing regime, regimentation and prison-like atmosphere in the public schools, as a youth and workforce trained to obey and submit is required for war. It is preparation for war that poses a direct danger to our youth, who are being recruited to commit crimes against the peoples abroad. It is a war economy that distorts and disrupts the economy, with trillions in wealth produced by workers wasted on war and destruction, rather than being invested in the well-being and rights of the people, abroad and at home. The military is racist to the core and uses racism to dehumanize those being attacked. One cannot really talk about issues of education or equality without addressing the need for an antiwar government and peace economy.

Building the new can also be done by discussing and organizing for a new electoral process, with public funding for the process, not the candidates, and a process that informs and politicizes the public. Such a process can be developed at a local level and promoted statewide, by candidates chosen by the people and through our independent mechanisms, like *Voice of Revolution* and similar independent press, websites, etc. Building the new can be done, especially if we do not let the old dictate our actions.

Anyone planning to run should first seek approval by the people and engage with them in deciding the platform. Advancing a platform for an antiwar government and peace economy greatly contributes to the new and we urge all candidates to adopt it.

ELECTIONS 2018

People Must Play a Role in Deciding the Agenda

As various individuals begin announcing their plans to run for office in 2018, which include races for New York State Governor and other state and federal offices, one of the problems that presents itself is that of the candidate's platform. In the current set up, individuals decide to run, often depending not on what kind of public support they have, but rather on what kind of financial backing they have or can secure. The individual also commonly decides the platform, and for Governor, their running mate for Lieutenant Governor. The people are then called on to support the given candidate based on what he or she promises. It is a process that excludes the people from deciding the platform, when that should be the starting point.

It is important to look at the necessity to modernize the process — to put working people at the center, not at the margins, as currently exists. Public meetings and forums of various kinds, at universities, workplaces, community centers, senior's homes, should be organized to engage the public in discussion about their concerns and the platform they want. If that were to occur, there is no question that problems like poverty, inequality, the environment and war would be key aspects of such a platform. Solutions like guaranteeing the equal rights to education, housing and jobs would also be critical, especially in cities where these rights are systematically denied and racism by the government prevalent.

Instead of candidates coming to promote whatever they have decided on for a platform, what is needed is public debate and discussion. Those considering running should themselves organize such debate — should begin by seeking the views of the public as to what problems to focus on and what solutions can be provided.

Given current conditions, where the threat of broader war and more wars is growing and where militarization is impacting all aspects of life, including the economy, the environment, education and healthcare, the need for an anti-war stand is crucial. More generally, supporting the need for an anti-war government and peace economy is an overall direction needed. What that may concretely mean in each state needs to be explored. In New York State, for example, closing the Hancock drone base near Syracuse and supporting the proposal to close the Niagara Air Force base and turn it into a solar farm, producing far more jobs and clean energy, are more specific demands in an anti-war, peace economy direction. So too would the elimination of military recruiters in our high schools and college campuses. Or at the very least, equal time for an anti-war alternative and support for students opposing the military.

For many cities and states, the issue of lead poisoning is also an important one, both in terms of the right to safe housing and water and in terms of its impact on children and education. Like antiwar issues, it is also a unifying demand, bringing together educators, youth and parents. New York State, for example,

refuses to utilize the CDC standard for what constitutes too high a level of lead in the blood. New York uses 10 micrograms per deciliter of blood, while the CDC, in 2012, adopted a threshold of 5 micrograms. Further the CDC states that no level of lead in the blood is safe. How is it that New York can provide \$1.31 billion in public funds to the Pentagon but cannot ensure safe housing and drinking water for all?

An essential part of a platform is also that on electoral reform, so as to modernize the current system in a manner that empowers the people themselves to govern and decide. The current set up does the opposite. It keeps the people out of power and the rich in power. It robs the people of a deciding role and imposes a system that is corrupt and characterized by hugely expensive negative campaigning divorced from the problems of the times and their solutions. It is a system that produced the two most hated candidates for president and that is increasingly depoliticizing people, depriving them of their right to decide the affairs of society.

Changing the electoral process would include funding the process, not the candidates, and ensuring a process that informs the public and enables the public to determine the platform and the best candidates to represent such a platform. It would outlaw the negative campaigning and character assassination which divert from the fact that people do not want candidates of the rich and do want an alternative. It puts decision making in the hands of the people, not the individual candidates, not their financial backers, but the people themselves.

Voice of Revolution urges any considering running to join in taking this stand by organizing to meet with people and not just consult them, but actually accept their demands for a platform. We have no doubt that if potential candidates organized public meetings, common demands of an anti-war, pro-social and pro-peace direction will emerge. We also think its critical for electoral reform empowering the people to decide to be a part of any platform.



I • **Reject Criminalization of Dissent**

actions also being targeted. The government is striving both to intimidate and disrupt dissent, while also making this criminalization “legal.”

For example, about 200 demonstrators from actions during Trump’s inauguration were rounded up en masse by police, blocked from leaving and then arrested. They are all being charged with felonies — urging others to riot and conspiracy to riot — when more commonly misdemeanor charges like refusal to disperse or resisting arrest are given. The 200 are not being charged for any individual actions, but rather simply being present in the group is being used as grounds for the conspiracy to riot charges. The government is demanding 60-year prison sentences. The protesters targeted include legal observers, journalists and medics. The insistence on pursuing felony charges and long sentences simply for demonstrating are means both to intimidate these and all future demonstrators, while also making this government impunity “legal,” through these court actions.

Those organizing to protect water and Mother Earth are also facing not only police attacks on demonstrators but also criminal charges, against both individuals and organizations. For example Standing Rock Sioux tribal member Chase Iron Eyes is being prosecuted in South Dakota for his role in the water protectors actions against the Dakota Access Pipeline. He too is being charged with starting a riot.

Iron Eyes is lead counsel at the Lakota People’s Law Project (donate to the defense of #NoDAPL resisters at the Lakota People’s Law Project website.) He and others charged in the protests plan to use a necessity defense because of the imminent threat to their only source of water and the ways the pipeline and actions of the Trump administration undermine the law. It was necessary for them to protest because there was no alternative. But it is the judge that decides if such a defense will be permitted.

In addition to criminal prosecution, the #NoDAPL protest is also facing a civil case alleging racketeering. Energy Transfer Partners hired a security firm that also gathered information for

a massive conspiracy lawsuit that was filed later against environmental organizations. As part of trying to suppress dissent, these actions force organizations to expend considerable time and human resources defending themselves and all those targeted. It creates the notion that it is the demonstrators that are the criminals, while the government is the protector. The firm resistance, in the courts and on the ground is showing the opposite is true. The struggles against oil pipelines also shows the need to strengthen the unity between U.S. and Canadian workers, as both are contending with these attacks and government impunity.

In addition, efforts are being made to increasingly restrict the use of public space as areas for the public to express its opinion. Protesters on private land or tribal lands, as occurred at Standing Rock and other areas opposing pipelines, are being harassed and arrested for crimes of the monopolies. In Los Angeles, there is in effort, backed by police officials, to pass an ordinance making it a crime to speak beyond the time limit given. In Los Angeles for city meetings, for example, that time limit is two minutes. People have been arrested for speaking twenty seconds beyond that limit, but then released, as it is not a crime. The ordinance is designed to now make this a crime, with those targeting police killings and abuse especially targeted. It is also worded in such a way that it could be broadly extended to other public spaces.

There is no necessity, in terms of public safety or protection for these police actions. On the contrary, their purpose is to intimidate the public and impose acceptance of police impunity, during demonstrations, on public streets, at public hearings. The stepped up use of felony charges, long sentences, collective punishment and criminalization of speech are all part of the destruction of public opinion and public space to express that opinion. In its place is the disinformation that standing up for rights and being political in the interests of the people are crimes. Despite these attacks however, people continue to resist and defend their rights. Our security lies in stepping up this fight for rights and defending the rights of all, individuals and organizations.

UNPRECEDENTED BLANKET CHARGES OF CONSPIRACY TO RIOT

Trump Inauguration Protesters Oppose Felony Charges

About 200 protestors, journalists and legal observers who demonstrated at Trump’s inauguration are organizing to reject felony charges and the long prison terms that go with them. November 15, 2017 was the opening day of court for the first round of defendants, the second round is expected to begin December 11, 2017. The charges are being pursued even before an independent investigation into police misconduct on Inauguration Day is concluded. False arrest, including of these 200, are among the issues being investigated.

The protesters were rounded up en masse during the large demonstrations organized against Trump and the undemocratic elections more generally, with slogans such as *Not Our President*,

Not Our Democracy. This particular group had temporarily separated from the larger demonstration. Police then surrounded these demonstrators and blocked them from leaving — known as kettling — and then arrested all of them.

Commonly, demonstrators that are arrested are given individual misdemeanor charges, like disorderly conduct or refusal to disperse, which are often dismissed or carry a minimal fine. For this action, the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia is persisting with blanket felony charges of urging a riot and conspiracy to riot against all 200, and demanding 60-year sentences for each person. It is the blanket felony charges and long prison terms that lawyers are calling unprecedented

REJECT CRIMINALIZATION OF DISSENT

and clearly designed to stifle and criminalize dissent.

All 200 are also being held accountable for some broken windows, which many at the action think were done by police provocateurs, as has occurred many times in the past. The *Washington Post* reported back in April that DC police had actually infiltrated the group ahead of its planned January protest. It is the existence of broken windows that police are using to justify the mass arrest. They are not charging any specific person, but rather the entire group.

One J20 defendant said “Charges like these are intended to silence communities when the time comes for people to resist.” He continued, “How are people expected to be brave enough to resist when the consequences could be a lifetime of incarceration? Never mind the beatings from the police. These charges are intended to keep people afraid, indoors and obedient. And this case itself is intended to set the precedent for more of this.” Even so, he and the others are persisting in resisting and being joined by many supporters at the court house and online.

The government has also issued a huge metadata subpoena against the server that hosted the DisruptJ20 (Disrupt January 20) website. Cell phones of those arrested were seized and searched for their data. DreamHost was subpoenaed by the government in August for hosting DisruptJ20.org. According to the ACLU, the warrant sought the website’s database records, had the possibility of implicating more than 1 million users, and would include the “IP addresses of over 1.3 million visitors to the site,” as federal prosecutors want the IP addresses of anyone who visited disruptj20.org. As well the personal information of administrators and thousands of individuals who interacted with the site are being demanded. “No plausible explanation exists for a search warrant of this breadth,” said one lawyer opposing the subpoena.

Last month, Chief Judge Robert E. Morin, of the District of Columbia Superior Court, partly limited the warrant. However he allowed significant parts of it to stand. A lawyer for Public Citizen, also involved in challenging the subpoena, said, “The judge has decided to allow a search of emails from anonymous users (without their identifying information) even though the government never showed that it had a good reason to look at those emails.” He added, “The judge is denying Public Citizen and DreamHost the opportunity to explain why the government’s arguments for a search protocol or access to a particular record should be rejected.”

Police Guilty of Violent Repression

While demonstrators are being unjustly charged with conspiracy to riot — not an actual riot, just a conspiracy — the police are not being held accountable for their violence against protesters. The ACLU cited extensive use of the chemical weapon pepper spray, concussion grenades and stingers, including on people already detained, and holding people outdoors for excessive periods of time without access to food, water or bathrooms. The DC police deployed weapons on 191 occasions during the inauguration, including 74 sting-ball grenades (explosive ‘rubber-ball’ style grenades), firing six 40 mm Stinger rubber bullets, five foam batons, and one 40 mm Exact impact round. Even after protesters were captured in the kettling operation, body cam footage showed the police continued to fire tear gas at them. Tear gas is a chemical weapon outlawed



for use in war.

The ACLU also filed a lawsuit in June accusing police of using sexual abuse as a form of punishment against four people arrested during the protests. At a press conference at that time, photojournalist Shay Horse who was detained explained that he was taken to a “training facility,” told to drop his pants and had his testicles “yanked on” and then the officer “stuck his finger up each of our anuses and wiggled it around.” Horse continued, “I felt like they were using molestation and rape as punishment. They used those tactics to inflict pain and misery on people who are supposed to be innocent until proven guilty.”

The excessive charges and sentences are also a means to try and get some demonstrators to accept guilty pleas on lesser charges and/or testify against fellow demonstrators, so as to divide and demoralize those resisting.

A National Lawyers Guild (NLG) member explained that, “The novel part of this case is about charging everyone who was scooped up in the kettle with the conspiracy and all the blanket felonies in a very indiscriminate manner. That also coincides with the things that the prosecution has been doing against individuals who are named as defendants.” She added that about 95 percent of criminal cases end in plea agreements, given that the odds are often stacked against defendants, who are coerced into taking plea agreements instead of gambling against a biased system. In this case the government is claiming that anybody who was indiscriminately scooped up that day is inherently guilty of that conspiracy and therefore culpable for all of the charges. She emphasized that most of the defendants are only connected to each other because of the prosecution and the mass arrest.

Resistance Persists

Those being charged have organized together to oppose efforts to divide and intimidate them. They organized to work together remotely, overcoming the distances, and to work in common to reject the charges and long sentences. Despite all of the hardships and threats that the government has imposed, they are persisting in their resistance. They, together with various legal and rights organizations, are ensuring no one is left alone and that material and emotional support is being provided. New relationships are being developed as a result of working together to defend rights.

Will You “Promise to Protect”? Coalition Urges New Wave of Resistance to Stop Keystone XL

Jake Johnson, November 25, 2017, Common Dreams

On October 23, ninety-two of the world’s largest banks met in São Paulo, Brazil to vote on a policy that upholds Indigenous people’s right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) to allow or disallow projects on their lands. Local activists and environmental allies protested against three of the banks involved with the financing of dirty fossil fuel projects (like the Dakota Access Pipeline and Keystone XL). The day started off with a prayer circle, followed by three divestment actions at Wells Fargo, Citibank, and JPMorgan Chase. This action was part of a global divestment movement, where over 50 actions were held across the world.

Local activists and environmental allies protested against three of the banks involved with the financing of dirty fossil fuel projects, like the Dakota Access Pipeline and Keystone XL, in São Paulo, Brazil on October 23, 2017. (Photo: Rainforest Action Network)

Shortly following the Nebraska Public Service Commission’s “shortsighted and dangerous” vote to green-light TransCanada’s Keystone XL (KXL) pipeline, a coalition comprised of Indigenous peoples, farmers, and ranchers living along the oil project’s proposed route published a letter urging the public to join them in protecting sacred land from corporate exploitation.

Endorsed by Native tribes, green groups, and high-profile environmentalists, the “Promise to Protect” call to action argues that making “a concerted stand” against TransCanada’s \$8 billion dirty energy project “will make other fossil fuel companies think that much harder about their own expansion plans.”

“Together we’ve stopped them for many years, and we are going to keep stopping them,” the letter reads. “But we need everyone’s help. We need you to take a stand no matter what land you live or work on. The struggle to save Mother Earth begins with you.”

“For many years the tribes, indigenous leaders, farmers, ranchers, and allies everywhere have kept this pipeline at bay,” the coalition notes. “That has been a great achievement. We honestly don’t know if we can hold the line against Keystone XL forever — but we know that we have a chance.”

The letter goes on to make several requests of those who wish to participate in the “creative resistance” against KXL that is expected to take shape in the coming months, including:

- Commitment to entirely peaceful acts of protest, even in the face of “the pain caused by TransCanada’s aggression”;
- Respect for “the leadership of Indigenous peoples, farmers, and ranchers in the action, and the plans and strategies of the front lines and their allies who have made promises to protect the land, water, and climate”;
- Preparation in advance of the demonstrations, including training sessions with organizers, so that “you’re able to find the place you’re most needed on any given day.”

The fossil fuel industry “believes that with the inauguration of



Mr. Trump, the obstacles in their path have disappeared,” the letter concludes. “They are unaware of the rising tide of indigenous unity and the strong alliances with ranchers, farmers and the climate justice movement which grew stronger at Standing Rock. When the president approved the federal permits for KXL last winter, he asked TransCanada executives when construction would start: Our job is to make sure the answer is, no time soon.”

Nebraska’s Public Service Commission voted 3-2 on November 20 to grant TransCanada the final permit to begin construction along an alternative route to the one the company initially proposed. If built, the pipeline would carry an estimated 800,000 gallons of tar sands oil per day from Alberta, Canada through several states en route to Texas oil refineries.

In addition to the mass action that is expected to accompany any advances in construction of the pipeline, a flood of appeals and lawsuits are expected to challenge Nebraska’s decision to approve the project in the coming weeks.

“The climate can’t handle another tar sands pipeline,” Annie Leonard, executive director of Greenpeace USA, declared in a statement. “We won’t stand idly by while new fossil fuel infrastructure projects, like the Keystone XL pipeline, threaten communities and put drinking water at risk. TransCanada and the other companies trying to build new tar sands pipelines will continue to face a wall of resistance until each and every one of these projects is cancelled.”

8,000 People in Just 24 Hours Make “Promise to Protect”

Less than 48 hours after a panel in Nebraska gave final approval for the Keystone XL pipeline to be built in the state, more than 8,000 people vowed to put their bodies on the lines — and in front of the construction path, if needed — to make sure the construction never happens.

The vow to stand against the pipeline — called the “Promise to Protect” — was launched November 20 during a gathering of

Indigenous leaders and their allies in South Dakota who renewed their vows to defend sacred lands, waters, and sites against new pipelines and any expansion of the Canadian tar sands.

Joye Braun, leader of the Wakpa Waste Camp at the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation in South Dakota, said, “It gives me a great sense of hope and community to see nearly 8,000 people who have signed on to the ‘Promise to Protect’ our water, our homelands, our people, and to stand in solidarity with us on the ground. Especially our Indigenous communities, our tribes, and our farmer and rancher friends. This is hope, this is power — people power.”

Faith Spotted Eagle, member of the Yankton Sioux Nation, said the surge of people committing to stand against Keystone XL shows that Monday’s decision was not a win for pipeline owner TransCanada. “Continued attempted assaults on Mother Earth are never winning actions,” she said. “The No KXL Dakota/Lakota gathering at Kul Wicasa on the same day of November 20 is an exciting renewed strong circle of allies who walk forward stronger than ever. We will prevail in our spiritual movement.”

People can sign the petition as individuals, but entire organizations can also make the commitment.

“TransCanada has many hurdles still ahead on Keystone XL, and if they ever run out, thousands of people have promised to be the biggest one,” added May Boeve, executive director of 350.org, also backing the petition. “This pipeline’s route through the upper Midwest has been hampered at every turn for nearly a decade, and we’re doing all we can to keep it that way.”

As the petition states:

“We — Indigenous leaders, farmers and ranchers, students, scientists, faith leaders, and more — will make a series of peaceful stands along the proposed pipeline route; resolute displays of our continuing opposition to a plan that endangers the waters of the Midwest and the climate of our one earth. Water is life; climate is life — those will be our rallying cries against a project that will endanger both.

“We know asking you to travel is asking a lot. The pipeline route is far away from where most people live. But the Indigenous peoples, farmers and ranchers of the region have fought this good fight for years now and we owe it to them to be there at the critical moment, when they ask us to be.”

The statement adds. “If we make a stand now it will improve our odds in a thousand other similar fights happening now and in the years ahead.”

BARRED FROM USING NECESSITY DEFENSE

Climate Activist Who Shut Off Montana Tar Sands Pipeline Gets Felony Conviction

Shut It Down-Climate Direct Action

In a remarkably short trial in Montana’s Chouteau County District Court lasting just a day and a half, a jury found Leonard Higgins, a retired Oregon state worker turned climate activist who shut off a tar sands pipeline to fight climate change, guilty of felony criminal mischief and misdemeanor criminal trespass. The conviction carries a maximum possible sentence of 10 years in jail and fines of up to \$50,000. A sentencing hearing is scheduled for January 2.

Higgins openly admits that on October 11, 2016, he cut two chains to enter a fenced enclosure around the Enbridge tar sands pipeline in Coal Banks Landing, Montana, and turned the emergency shutoff valve. In fact, he and others called the company to alert them to obviate any safety problems, and a supporter filmed and livestreamed the action, after which they both waited to be arrested.

The case made national news. Higgins’ action was part of a coordinated effort that simultaneously shut off tar sands pipelines in four states, temporarily halting all flow into the U.S. of tar sands, which is the most carbon-intensive and climate damaging form of oil. In addition to being prosecuted in state court, Higgins and his fellow “valve turners” were recently the target of a letter signed by 84 members of Congress to the Justice Department, asking pointedly why it had not also prosecuted them under federal law,

and whether their actions met the definition of domestic terrorism under the *Patriot Act*.

Higgins, a mild-mannered 65-year-old who says he acted out of conscience to help prevent climate harms for the sake of his children and grandchildren, was the opposite of confrontational. He expressed gratitude for his day in court and the chance to share his story and spend Thanksgiving with friends and supporters who attended the trial, “in such a beautiful place.” He pleaded guilty to misdemeanor trespass and does not dispute the facts of what he did. He argues that the imperative to prevent climate harms justified his action. He was not permitted to make that argument in court, however.

“I’m happy for the opportunity to share why I had to shut down this pipeline, and I really appreciate the time and dedication of the jury and the judge,” Higgins said. “I was disappointed and surprised by the verdict, but even more disappointed that I was not allowed a ‘necessity defense,’ and that I wasn’t allowed to talk about climate change as it related to my state of mind. When I tried to talk about why I did what I did I was silenced.”

“We’re disappointed that Mr. Higgins was denied the opportunity to present a full defense and explain to the jury why he took his courageous action,” said Kelsey Skaggs, Executive Director of

the Climate Defense Project and member of Higgins' legal team. "Because of the fossil fuel industry's enormous influence, activists fighting for the future are being convicted while the real climate criminals walk free."

Before trial, Higgins and his defense team filed a motion with the Chouteau County District Court and a petition to the Montana Supreme Court asking permission to offer a "necessity defense," and argue before the jury that his action was necessary in order to prevent climate harms much more severe than the consequences of trespassing and turning the pipeline emergency valve. It would have allowed the defense team to bring in expert witnesses and evidence on climate change and the climate impacts of tar sands oil. Such a climate "necessity defense" was recently granted to Higgins' fellow valve-turners Emily Johnston and Annette Klapstein, whose trial is pending in a Minnesota court and in a similar case in Spokane, Washington.

But Judge Daniel Boucher, who presided in the trial, denied without a hearing Higgins' requests for a necessity defense, calling them a "mistaken attempt" "to place U.S. energy policy on trial." That ruling meant Higgins' jury was barred from hearing or considering

evidence about the climate harms that motivated him.

In court, Higgins himself was also prevented from discussing climate change or explaining that he was motivated by the need to prevent climate harms. In fact, whenever he used the word "climate" in his testimony, the prosecutor objected and the judge sustained the objection. [...]

In the wake of Standing Rock, more pipeline protests have sprung up nationwide, including against the Line 3 pipeline expansion in Minnesota, the Bayou Bridge Pipeline in Louisiana, the Trans-Pecos Pipeline in West Texas, the Diamond Pipeline in Memphis, the Sabal Trail Pipeline in Florida, and others. At the same time, the crackdown on the protests is intensifying. So far this year, several states have passed laws that would criminalize and toughen penalties for peaceful protest and non-violent direct action. Another 20 states are considering such measures.

That makes the trials of Higgins and his fellow climate activists important precedents. More such trials are coming, with more serious charges and penalties at stake. Higgins emphasized that as more people stand up, others "will feel the same compulsion, the same duty to take action, to do what is right."

Intimidation Intensifies at Camp White Pine as Land Defenders Fight the Mariner East 2 Pipeline

Jen Deerinwater, November 29, 2017

Camp White Pine (CWP) — a resistance camp formed by people fighting the Mariner East 2 pipeline — sits on 27 acres of privately owned land in rural Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, population 45,634. The land defenders at CWP have come together to fight this pipeline as well as the fracking crisis in Pennsylvania and the mineral extraction industry as a whole.

If completed, the Mariner East 2 (ME2) will add two pipelines to the existing Mariner East 1 to transport highly explosive natural gas liquids. The proposed route crosses through 350 miles of Ohio, West Virginia and southern Pennsylvania, ending at the Marcus Hook refinery on the Delaware River. Despite the industry's claims that ME2 is necessary for U.S. energy needs, the natural gas liquids that make their way through the pipeline will actually be transported to Scotland, where British-owned corporation INEOS will use them to make plastic products.

The Mariner East 2 was a project of Sunoco Logistics, which completed a merger on April 28, 2017, with the notorious Energy Transfer Partners (ETP), the company behind the Dakota Access pipeline. ETP has one of the worst safety records of companies in the industry, and has unleashed brutal violence and human rights violations at Standing Rock and against those resisting other current pipeline projects, such as the Bayou Bridge Pipeline in Louisiana.

Although it is not yet completed, the ME2 is already responsible for 202,000 gallons of drilling fluids spilled in 90 events at 42 sites in Pennsylvania, leading to the contamination of well water for many area residents. In the aftermath of these spills, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Quality imposed bans on

horizontal fracking or Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) and established other safety restrictions for the pipeline, which ETP soon violated. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection released a statement on November 15, 2017, regarding a new HDD spill in Berks County. ETP did not have the necessary permits to drill, either.

ETP recently announced a completion date for the ME2 of the second quarter of 2018, approximately 18 months later than the original date. This delay is due in part to the successful resistance efforts of Pennsylvania residents, including the people at Camp White Pine.

Targeted by Police for Sitting in Trees

CWP resides on the land of Ellen and Steven Gerhart, a retired schoolteacher and artist. Since first learning of the ME2 in March 2015, Ellen and her daughter Elise Gerhart have taken numerous steps — including direct action, as well as an ongoing class-action lawsuit and private civil suit — to protect their home from the devastating effects of resource extraction.

CWP's creation in February 2017 was influenced by the camps at Standing Rock. The camp consists of three "tree sits" — platforms and small homes that provide safe shelter to the land defenders. The "sits" were built into the trees in February 2016, and strategically placed in order to prevent hundreds of trees on the three-acre pipeline easement from being felled in order to construct the HDD. If constructed, the horizontal fracking pipelines would cross a small pond on the Gerhart's land that is fed by a stream that discharges into the Little Trough Creek, a tributary of the Juniata River. The

REJECT CRIMINALIZATION OF DISSENT

Huntingdon County area consists of wetlands, family homes and small farms of livestock and crops.

The Gerhart's home was invaded by tree-cutting crews and police three times in 2016, before ETP even obtained its permits to build. On March 29, 2016, tree-cutting crews and police entered, without notice, the back of the Gerhart's land. Elise Gerhart and her friends occupied three tree sits at the time and prevented some trees from being cut down. [...] While in the sit, Gerhart said other trees were falling all around her, including into the safety lines that protected her from falling out of the tree sit, 50 feet in the air. Gerhart and the land defenders on the ground reported that the police stood by and watched the danger unfold.

Police made two arrests that day on the Gerhart's property: Pennsylvania residents Alex Lotorto and Elizabeth Glunt, who were present to observe any safety or legal violations, were taken into custody. Both were charged with disorderly conduct and criminal contempt.

Lotorto ... was held him on \$200,000 bail. Glunt's arrest came after she crossed onto the easement to tell the cutting crews they were getting too close to the tree sits. She saw that law enforcement officers were taking no action to protect those in the sits, and was concerned about their safety. She was arrested and held on \$100,000 bail. When asked how she was treated by police, Glunt said, "They treat you like you're a terrible person even though you're literally standing there, not doing anything wrong."

On March 30, 2016, the cutting crews and law enforcement returned a second time. Two people were arrested: Nate Irvin and Ellen Gerhart. Ellen Gerhart said she told the sheriff's deputies, "You have to do something because they're getting too close to the tree that Elise is in." Their response was to arrest her for "creating a hazardous situation." She was later released on her own recognizance.

The tree-cutting crews and law enforcement returned to the Gerhart's home on April 7, 2016. This action was not permitted by law: Thanks to the US Fish and Wildlife Service's protections of migratory birds and the Indiana bat, all logging and tree-cutting companies were prohibited from entering certain portions of protected land (including the Gerhart's land) after March 31 and before November 14, 2016. Despite knowing this law, the tree-cutting crews and law enforcement returned to the Gerhart's home.

These protections ended on November 15, 2017. Elise Gerhart reported during a conference call that there was a significant increase



in aerial surveillance, which now includes both a helicopter and an unidentified plane, beginning November 14, 2017. She said she heard chainsaws from her bedroom and rushed to the sits again.

Arrests and charges were again made. Ellen Gerhart was arrested and held in jail for three days for telling the police the cutting crews were getting too close to the sit her daughter occupied. She was denied access to a phone call, legal counsel and medical care for part of her time in jail. While being interrogated by a corrections officer at the Center County Correctional Facility, Gerhart said she refused to answer questions and asked for legal counsel again. She was then told by the officer that refusing to answer questions was a "level one offense." She was not given access to her attorney until three days after her arrest.

Also on April 7, Elise Gerhart was charged with disorderly conduct, but not arrested, while the other tree-sitters were not charged. The Gerhart's civil suit court documents claim that the defendants targeted Elise "not in the pursuit of justice, but to arbitrarily and maliciously send a message to the Gerhart family and their supporters to discourage their opposition to the pipeline." The charges against Elise were eventually dropped.

It was not until February 13, 2017, that ETP even obtained permits to begin construction on the ME2. However, before that, ETP had already been obtaining Orders of Protection and Writs of Possession, which essentially treated the Gerharts as renters on their own land and ETP as their landlord. A Writ of Possession is usually given to landlords in order to evict tenants and use law enforcement in the process. The fact that this was granted to ETP shows how both the company and the state view the land and those living on it.

The Gerharts are currently involved in a class-action suit led by the Clean Air Council to have the permits pulled from ETP. They also have a case against the use of eminent domain to obtain their land for the ME2. This case may be heard by the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Supreme Court. Additionally, on September 25,

2017, Ellen and Elise Gerhart, Alex Lotorto and Elizabeth Glunt filed a civil suit against ETP, Sunoco Logistics, TigerSwan, social media professional Nick Johnson (who was hired by TigerSwan), and Huntingdon County Sheriffs and Pennsylvania State Troopers for wrongful arrest and harassment. CWP and Elise Gerhart are also members of the Stop ETP coalition, which was formed with the sole objective of stopping the pipeline company's projects.

Since the beginning, CWP, the Gerharts and the land defenders at the camp have been targets of harassment, surveillance, infiltration and threats of murder and rape. Elise Gerhart, as well as several of the land defenders, have been followed on numerous occasions and had photos of themselves, their cars and personal information placed on the Facebook group PA Progress, created by Nick Johnson, a social media professional hired by ETP-employed mercenary firm TigerSwan. (The group no longer exists.)

Additionally, numerous surveillance helicopters and drones have flown over the Gerhart's property and the camp. The use of eminent domain for extraction projects is business as usual for the U.S.

government. The land being stolen from the Gerharts for extraction purposes is the same land stolen from my indigenous ancestors in order to grow capitalist and colonialist consumption of the Earth. Despite the dangers that come with land defense, many of the climbers and those on the ground supporting them have said they will not be deterred from this mission. [...]

I STAND WITH



CAMP WHITE PINE

LA Police Arresting People For Speaking 20 Seconds Over Allotted Time At City Meetings

Emily C. Bell, *alternet.org*

The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) has apparently been arresting residents for speaking 20 seconds longer than their allotted time at public city hearings. Now the ACLU of Southern California is fighting an ordinance that could make it even harder for residents to speak out — especially those who dissent against the practices of the LAPD. If passed, the ordinance will make it “an arrestable offense to violate any posted rules of public facilities” and would empower law enforcement to make criminal trespass charges, tighten restrictions on speaking time and shut down criticism at meetings. The ACLU is circulating a petition targeted at council members. A letter was also sent to Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti and Los Angeles city council members. The letter calls on them to “reject the proposed ordinance,” because “although styled as a public safety ordinance, it would do nothing to improve public safety.”

The LAPD had the most “officer-involved killings” in 2015 and 2016, according to the *Guardian*. When the data is compared to cities with similar populations, the “rate of fatal encounters” was higher in LA than both Chicago and New York last year. [...]

The letter goes on to reference two specific cases in which residents were removed from public meetings at the Board of

Police Commissioners. It gives the example of 81-year-old Tut Hayes. A video shows Hayes speaking at a meeting in 2016, before being forcibly removed from the room, while onlookers yell at the police to let him go.

Black Lives Matter organizer and professor Melina Abdullah has also been removed from several Board of Police Commissioners meetings. As the *Los Angeles Times* reported in May 2016, an LAPD spokesman said Abdullah “was removed from the room by officers and later arrested on suspicion of resisting arrest.” According to the ACLU, she “was arrested for speaking 20 seconds over the 2-minute public comment limit.” Neither Hayes nor Abdullah was charged following the 2016 removals and arrests. Abdullah, along with several other community members, was also arrested in August 2017 during a meeting on the shooting of Carnell Snell Jr. They were subsequently released.

However, as the ACLU's letter states, those arrested were not “charged with a crime, because they had violated no law. This ordinance seeks to change that.” The A letter also raises concerns that the ordinance will be selectively enforced, depending on the content of public remarks. It is also possible the ordinance will be used broadly to include other public spaces, such as where demonstrations are held outside council chambers.

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ing runs. And these games are continuing in December.

Trump has now re-designated the DPRK as a “state sponsor of terrorism,” with no factual basis. The U.S. and its monopoly media also constantly paint the DPRK as the nuclear threat. But the facts say otherwise. The DPRK has no troops abroad, no foreign bases, no history of aggression, no use of nuclear weapons against anyone. The U.S. does. It is based on this long history of U.S. aggression, occupation and actual wars of destruction in the region that peoples of the region have designated the U.S. as the world’s biggest terrorist.

It is the U.S. that is the nuclear threat, not only in Korea but worldwide. The U.S. has the largest nuclear arsenal, the most varied means to deliver such weapons, and is the only one to have used them. It is the U.S. that threatens the preemptive first strike use of nuclear weapons, itself a war crime and crime against humanity, given its massive destruction of people and civilian infrastructure.

Preparation for war and propaganda for war, such as the war games and repeated threats to “totally destroy” the DPRK are all

crimes against the peace. They are crimes because to go to war, it is necessary to prepare for war. To prevent war it is necessary to prevent such preparation and block such propaganda, which is why they are considered crimes.

The DPRK has every right to defend itself. As long as the U.S. has nuclear weapons and threatens to use them, the DPRK is forced to also have such weapons. It has repeatedly proposed to instead have a nuclear-free zone on the peninsula. The U.S. refuses. The DPRK has proposed the signing of a peace treaty as an important step forward. The U.S. refuses. The DPRK has proposed many diplomatic and political solutions to the current situation. The U.S. offers only military ones, including increased sanctions, which are directed at bringing the people to their knees, not solving any problem.

The danger of nuclear war lies with the U.S. Strengthening the antiwar movement in the U.S. and organizing for an antiwar government is the means for the people of the U.S. to block this danger and make it possible for the U.S. to be a factor for peace, not war.

DPRK Statement on Successful Test-fire of New-Type ICBM

Rodong Sinmun, November 29, 2017

The government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) announced the following statement Wednesday over the successful test-fire of a new-type of intercontinental ballistic missile, ICBM:

The test-fire of the intercontinental ballistic missile Hwasong-15, newly developed under the political resolution and strategic decision of the Workers’ Party of Korea (WPK), was successfully carried out.

The ICBM Hwasong-15 weaponry system is an intercontinental ballistic missile tipped with a super-large heavy warhead, which is capable of striking the whole mainland of the U.S. This system has much greater advantages in its tactical and technological specifications and technical characteristics than the Hwasong-14, whose test-fire was conducted last July last. It is our most powerful ICBM and meets the goal for the completion of the missile systems development set by the DPRK.

Upon authorization of the WPK and the government of the DPRK, ICBM Hwasong-15 was launched at 02:48 on November 29, Juche 106 (2017) in the suburbs of Pyongyang under the guidance of Comrade Kim Jong Un.

After making a 53-minute flight along its preset orbit, the missile accurately landed in the target waters set in the open sea in the East Sea of Korea. The test-fire was conducted with the highest angle launch system and it had no adverse effect on the security of neighboring countries.

The rocket soared to the highest altitude of 4,475 kilometers (about 2,800 miles high) and then flew a distance of 950 kilometers (about 700 miles).

After watching the successful launch of the new type ICBM Hwasong-15, Kim Jong Un declared with pride that now we have finally realized the great historic cause of completing the state nuclear force, the cause of building powerful missiles.

The great success in the test-fire of ICBM Hwasong-15 is a priceless victory won by the great and heroic people of the DPRK who have upheld the WPK’s line on the simultaneous development of the two fronts with loyalty without the slightest vacillation despite the vicious challenges by the U.S. imperialists and their followers and manifold difficulties. [The two fronts are economic and military development — VOR Ed. Note]

The development and advancement of the strategic weapons of the DPRK are to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country from the U.S. imperialists’ nuclear blackmail policy and nuclear threat, and to ensure the peaceful life of the people, and therefore they would not pose any threat to any country and region as long as the interests of the DPRK are not infringed upon. This is our solemn declaration.

As a responsible nuclear power and a peace-loving state, the DPRK will make every possible effort to serve the noble purpose of defending the peace and stability of the world.

DPRK States that Nuclear Weapons are Aimed Solely at Defending Sovereignty

Hyun Lee, November 29, 2017, zoominkorea.org

The sixty-day clock has run out. After two months of relative quiet, North Korea test-launched another missile in the early morning hours of November 29 (local time). This time, it launched the Hwasong-15, confirmed to be an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) that reportedly flew 700 miles in 53 minutes before landing in the sea west of Japan. The missile reached an unprecedented altitude of 2800 miles, more than ten times the height of the International Space Station and is said to be capable of delivering a nuclear warhead to anywhere in the United States.

Last month, Joseph Yun, the U.S. State Department's top official on North Korea policy, had told an audience at the Council on Foreign Relations that if the DPRK halted its nuclear and missile tests for sixty days, the United States would resume direct talks with Pyongyang, according to the *Washington Post*. His comment echoed those of State Secretary Rex Tillerson: "The best signal that North Korea could give us that they're prepared to talk would be to stop these missile launches. We've not had an extended period of time where they have not taken some type of provocative action by launching ballistic missiles. So I think that would be the first and strongest signal they could send us is just stop, stop these missile launches."

The last DPRK missile test before this latest one was the launch of an intermediate-range ballistic missile on September 15, a little more than sixty days ago. Rather than reach out for talks, the United States chose to ramp up military exercises. Earlier this month, it

sent three aircraft carriers — the USS Ronald Reagan, Theodore Roosevelt and Nimitz — and their multi-ship strike groups as well as B-1 bombers to the area to participate in four days of military exercises with South Korea and Japan. Next week, the air forces of South Korea and the United States are scheduled to hold another exercise. Vigilant Ace, which will run from December 4 to 8, will deploy six F-22 Raptor stealth fighters and F-35 aircraft. About 12,000 U.S. personnel will participate with South Korean troops while 230 aircraft will be flown at eight U.S. and South Korean military installations, according to a news statement released by the U.S. Air Force. The U.S. Marine Corps and Navy troops will also participate.

Events could have taken a different turn had the United States matched Pyongyang's restraint by halting the war games. [...] The Koreans made clear the development and advancement of the strategic nuclear weapons of the DPRK are to defend the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country from the U.S. By not following through with overtures for detente after its own sixty-day deadline, the United States blew its last chance at negotiating with North Korea before it declared itself a de facto nuclear weapons state. Now it seems its only options are: war to denuclearize North Korea by force, which would claim millions of lives and destabilize the entire region as well as the global economy. Or a Peace Treaty to finally end the sixty-five year old Korean War and the withdrawal of its troops from the Korean peninsula.

US Imposes Additional Sanctions On North Korea, Designates It As A State Sponsor Of Terrorism

Yi Yong-in, Hankyoreh, November 23, 2017

The Trump administration imposed additional sanctions November 21 against individuals and groups involved in North Korean imports and exports, including Chinese trade companies and DPRK shipping companies and vessels. The move came one day after Trump announced the DPRK was being re-designated a state sponsor of terrorism for the first time in nine years.

The DPRK and Chinese individuals and groups subject to the sanctions are subject to having U.S. assets frozen and a ban on transactions with U.S. citizens. But given their relatively small scale and near-total lack of business connections to the U.S., the effect of the sanctions is predicted to be minimal. The 20 vessels targeted by the sanctions are prohibited from entering U.S. ports. With little to no likelihood that any of them would attempt to do so, the move is being read as indirect pressure on other countries to adopt similar bans.

The U.S. Treasury Department announced that it was sanctioning one person, 13 institutions, and 20 vessels. Three of the Chinese companies targeted were trade businesses: the Dandong Economy

& Trade Co., Dandong Xianghe Trading Co., and Dandong Hongda Trade Co. The companies in question were involved in trading of notebook computers, anthracite, iron and iron ore, lead ore, and zinc, the Treasury Department said. An investigation showed the companies traded about \$700-800 million worth of goods between January 2013 and August 2017. Also targeted for sanctions was Chinese national Sun Sidong and the Dandong Dongyuan Industrial Co., the company where he serves as president. Sun and his company exported items related to nuclear reactors to the DPRK, including vehicles, electronic equipment, and aluminum, the U.S. said.

Nine groups of the DPRK were also designated for sanctions. In addition to the workforce dispatching company the Korea South-South Cooperation Corporation, they included eight groups related to shipping and trade, including two government agencies, the Maritime Administration Bureau and Ministry of Land and Marine Transport; Rungrado Shipping Co., a trade company; and Korea Rungrado Ryongak Trading Co. Twenty vessels owned by DPRK shipping companies were also targeted for sanctions.

DPRK FOREIGN MINISTRY

Statement from DPRK's Institution for American Studies

KCNA

Jo Chol Su, press director of the Institution for American Studies of the DPRK Foreign Ministry of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), issued the following statement November 28:

Recently, some policy research institutions and media of the U.S. and other Western countries publicized the so called "merciless nuclear attack plan" of the DPRK and claimed that the DPRK is planning random and indiscriminate attacks on the U.S. and Asian countries, drawing no distinction between military and civilian targets.

On the other hand, they are prompting the baseless speculation that the DPRK seeks a nuclear attack on south Korea during the 2018 Winter Olympic Games and that the DPRK might go for another "ultra high level provocation" by conducting a ballistic missile test launch on the occasion of Christmas.

They claim that these projections are based on their study and analysis of the reports by the DPRK's media. However they are nothing but slanders to "demonize" the DPRK by twisting the meaning of our tough stand and are absurd claims by those who lack an elementary understanding of the purpose of the DPRK's nuclear deterrence.

It is none other than the U.S. that is hatching plots to launch preemptive nuclear strikes on sovereign countries after adding them to the list of targets for its preemptive nuclear strikes. The U.S. politicians are the very ones who call for the military option and preemptive strikes against sovereign states time and again without the slightest hesitation.

The U.S. had deployed massive amounts of nuclear weapons on

the Korean peninsula and now ceaselessly carries out joint military exercises under various names. The current situation evidently shows [the likelihood] that a nuclear war could break out on the peninsula due to Trump's war mania and that the choice made by the DPRK was absolutely right.

The attempts to defame the dignified image of the DPRK by spreading baseless allegations against it are further increasing our vigilance — as they are happening at the time when Trump designated the DPRK as a "state sponsor of terrorism" after vowing to "totally destroy" it. The efforts of the Trump administration to stifle the DPRK are reaching extremes.

To make it clear once again, the DPRK's nuclear force, which targets only the U.S. and no other country, is the reliable deterrent to prevent a nuclear war and firmly defend peace on the Korean peninsula by thoroughly eradicating the half-a-century long unilateral nuclear blackmail and threat from the U.S.

We take this opportunity to issue a warning to the pseudo-intellectuals who are hurling vicious abuse at the DPRK in pursuance of the moves of the Trump administration and some of the Western media that are producing false reports based on absurd and groundless speculation.

If you are truly interested in the settlement of the nuclear issue and peace and security, you should properly understand the root cause of the nuclear issue based on your own principles and contribute to international justice by being true to the principle of objectivity and remaining unbiased, the very life and mission of the media.

DPRK Letter to UN Secretary-General Opposing U.S. War Games

Rodong Sinmun, November 17, 2017

The permanent representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations sent a letter to the United Nations (UN) secretary-general on November 13 in denunciation of the U.S. nuclear war exercises aimed at the DPRK.

After deploying three nuclear powered aircraft carrier strike groups in waters around the Korean peninsula, the U.S. staged another joint military exercise with south Korea. And it reactivated an around-the-clock emergency sortie system of nuclear capable strategic B-52 bombers, which existed during the Cold War era, and is maintaining a surprise strike posture with frequent flights of B-1B and B-2 formations in the air space of south Korea.

Recalling the facts, the letter said:

The U.S. flung the words of "total destruction" of a sovereign state at the UN General Assembly, the world's largest official forum of diplomacy, and is now running amok using war exercises,

introducing nuclear war equipment in and around the Korean peninsula. This goes to prove that the U.S. itself is a chief offender of the escalation of tension and undermining of peace.

The large scale nuclear war exercises and blackmails, which the U.S. has staged for a whole year without a break, in collaboration with its followers, to stifle the DPRK, make one conclude that the option we have taken was quite right.

Despite this fact, the UN Security Council (UNSC), whose mission is to ensure world peace and security, keeps turning a blind eye to the nuclear war exercises of the U.S., which is hell-bent on bringing a catastrophic disaster to humanity. This gives rise to a serious concern about the double standard of the UNSC.

In this regard, in view of the world justice and impartiality, we kindly request the secretary-general to give your viewpoints as to the following questions:

Question 1; Do the nuclear war exercises in and around the Korean peninsula undertaken by the U.S. for a whole year without a break, targeting a sovereign state conform to the purpose of the UN Charter, which is to maintain peace and security?

Question 2; Since the DPRK and the U.S. are legally still in a state of armistice of belligerent parties, does the questioning in the UNSC of the self-defensive measures of one belligerent party, the DPRK only as a “threat,” ignoring the nuclear war provocative acts of the other belligerent party, the U.S., conform

to the principle of sovereign equality of the UN Charter?

We would like to politely request that the secretary-general give answers to the questions raised in conformity with the requirement of the UN Charter and the mission of the UN Secretariat, which holds impartiality and independence as its lifeline. At the same time we ask the secretary-general to bring to the attention of the UNSC under Article 99 of the UN Charter, regarding the danger being posed by the U.S. nuclear war exercises, which are clearly threats to international peace.

U.S. People’s Treaty with North Korea

Veterans for Peace

Alarmed by the threat of a nuclear war between the U.S. and North Korea, Veterans For Peace, joined by other U.S. peace groups have come together to send an open message to Washington and Pyongyang that we are strongly opposed to any resumption of the horrific Korean War. What we want is a peace treaty to finally end the lingering Korean War!

Inspired by the Vietnam-era People’s Peace Treaty, we have initiated a People’s Peace Treaty with North Korea, to raise awareness about the past U.S. policy toward North Korea, and to send a clear message that we, the people of the U.S., do not want another war with North Korea. This is not an actual treaty, but rather a declaration of peace from the people of the United States.

Help us collect as many signatures as possible by the end of 2017, and to publicize the People’s Peace Treaty. Please add your voice for peace by signing the People’s Peace Treaty with North Korea: http://org.salsalabs.com/o/826/p/dia/action4/common/public/?action_KEY=22497

People’s Peace Treaty with North Korea

A Message of Peace from the People of the United States

Deeply concerned with the increasing danger of the current military tensions and threats between the Governments of the United States and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korea), which may re-ignite the horrendous fighting in the Korean War by design, mistake or accident,

Recalling that the United States currently possesses about 6,800 nuclear weapons, and has threatened the use of nuclear weapons against North Korea in the past, including the most recent threat made by the U.S. President in his terrifying speech to the United Nations (“totally destroy North Korea”),

Regretting that the U.S. Government has so far refused to negotiate a peace treaty to replace the temporary Korean War Armistice Agreement of 1953, although such a peace treaty has been proposed by the DPRK many times from 1974 on,

Convinced that ending the Korean War officially is an urgent, essential step for the establishment of enduring peace and mutual respect between the U.S. and DPRK, as well as for the North Korean people’s full enjoyment of their basic human rights to life, peace and development – ending their long sufferings from the harsh economic sanctions imposed on them by the U.S. Government since 1950,



NOW, THEREFORE, as a Concerned Person of the United States of America (or on behalf of a civil society organization), I hereby sign this People’s Peace Treaty with North Korea, and

1) Declare to the world that the Korean War is over as far as I am concerned, and that I will live in “permanent peace and friendship” with the North Korean people (as promised in the 1882 U.S.-Korea Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation that opened the diplomatic relations between the U.S. and Korea for the first time);

2) Express my deep apology to the North Korean people for the U.S. Government’s long, cruel and unjust hostility against them, including the near total destruction of North Korea due to the heavy U.S. bombings during the Korean War;

3) Urge Washington and Pyongyang to immediately stop their preemptive (or preventive) conventional/nuclear attack threats against each other and to sign the new UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;

4) Call upon the U.S. Government to stop its large-scale, joint war drills with the armed forces of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and Japan, and commence a gradual withdrawal of the U.S. troops and weapons from South Korea;

5) Call upon the U.S. Government to officially end the lingering and costly Korean War by concluding a peace treaty with the DPRK without further delay, to lift all sanctions against the country, and to join the 164 nations that have normal diplomatic relations with the DPRK;

6) Pledge that I will do my best to end the Korean War, and to reach out to the North Korean people – in order to foster greater understanding, reconciliation and friendship.

ACTIONS IN JAPAN, KOREA, PHILIPPINES SAY:

No Trump, No War, Trump Not Welcome Here!

Numerous anti-war actions in Japan, Korea and the Philippines greeted President Trump during his trip to the region. Simultaneous actions were also organized in the U.S. These included those by BAYAN, U.S., which opposes U.S. imperialism in the Philippines, as well as those by Korean Americans and many other anti-war organizations in New York, Chicago, Washington DC, and Los Angeles.

The U.S. protests kicked off with a rally in New York's Koreatown on Friday, November 3. Protesters denounced Trump for his military threats and economic sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). They also targeted the Pentagon and military monopolies for their massive sale of weapons of destruction to countries in the region, especially south Korea. Similar rallies took place outside the White House in Washington DC and in Chicago and Los Angeles on November 4. In all the actions there was a common stand against war and for political solutions to current conflicts. Trump and the U.S. were targeted as the main source of tensions and crimes of aggression and emphasis given to demands for a peace treaty with the DPRK, an end to the massive U.S. war games in the region, and closing of all U.S. bases and removal of U.S. troops, in Japan, Korea and the Philippines.

Another significant aspect of the actions was a number of joint statements involving anti-war organizations from the U.S., Japan and Korea. These reflect efforts to strengthen relations by developing common work in the struggle against U.S. imperialism. They included a petition for a peace treaty with the DPRK, initiated by Veterans for Peace, which calls for living "in permanent peace and friendship" with the Koreans. It calls upon the "U.S. Government to stop its large-scale, joint war drills with the armed forces of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and Japan, and commence a gradual withdrawal of the U.S. troops and weapons

from South Korea;" and for "the U.S. Government to officially end the lingering and costly Korean War by concluding a peace treaty with the DPRK without further delay, to lift all sanctions against the country, and to join the 164 nations that have normal diplomatic relations with the DPRK." (see p. 15)

Similarly, a statement by Korean and Filipino organizations in the U.S., together with various anti-war organizations states: "We call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. military bases, personnel, agreements, exercises, war games, and all other operations from Asia and the Pacific, and for the U.S. government to respect the sovereignty of the countries of the region, including their right to self-determination. We demand an end to inflammatory rhetoric and anti-people policies of this Trump administration, which has already implemented anti-democratic processes in the United States." (see below)

Various international lawyers organizations also issued a statement calling on Trump to "not use the military bases in South Korea and Japan to threaten North Korea to heighten the crisis on the Korean peninsula." They demanded that the "U.S.-ROK joint military exercises that deploy a U.S. strategic weapon in accordance with a pre-emptive nuclear strike threatening North Korea must be stopped immediately."

Plans by anti-war organizations in the U.S., Korea and Japan are underway for a joint campaign to end the Korean War and for a Peace Treaty, and holding coordinated actions in all three countries, including possibly an international gathering in south Korea, on/around July 27, the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice.

Voice of Revolution salutes all the many actions and efforts to unite peoples of Korea, Japan the Philippines and the U.S. in standing to oppose U.S. wars, close all U.S. bases and *Bring All U.S. Troops Home Now!*

Peace Not War in Asia

BAYAN, U.S. and Nodutdol

For over seven decades, U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM), the largest and oldest of the nine U.S. unified combatant commands of the U.S. Armed Forces, has carried out military invasions, exercises, wars, and occupations throughout Asia and parts of Africa. These include the Korean War, the Vietnam War, nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands, illegally storing nuclear weapons in South Korea, the destabilization of local communities and denial of their development due to U.S. military bases and military exercises, including drone warfare, in Korea, Okinawa, the Philippines, Guam, and the list goes on. The U.S. has over 180 military bases concentrated in this region alone. Everyday, the peoples of the Korean Peninsula, the Philippines, Asia and the Pacific region continue to wage life-and-death resistance to US-led war and military occupation

— the biggest obstacle to genuine peace, democracy, development, and security in the region.

Asia is the largest market for U.S. exports, including military weapons exports, worth \$600 billion. From November 3-14, Trump will visit five countries in Asia – Japan, South Korea, China, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Amidst escalating hostility, war provocations, and threats to "destroy" North Korea, Trump will seek to consolidate U.S. lackeys in order to secure U.S. military and economic hegemony in the region. Trump will seek to put pressure on the governments he meets with. Some of his stated goals include re-negotiation of the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and permanent deployment of THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) missile defense system in South Korea.

Trump is expected to praise the Philippine military's brutal implementation of the U.S.-instigated War on Terror in Mindanao and push for continued collaboration in intelligence gathering, counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism between the U.S. and Philippines. The Trump administration will attempt to dominate the East Asia Summit in the Philippines, a regional gathering of state leaders where talks determining neoliberal economic policies will translate into greater U.S. military basing to protect U.S. trade interests and control major commercial shipping routes.

As Koreans, Filipinos, and peoples of the Asian diaspora, as well as peace activists, we stand with those in the frontlines of resistance to growing U.S.-led war, militarism, and neoliberalism in Asia and the Pacific, especially with those staging massive protests in Japan, Korea (where November 4 is called 'No Trump Day of Action'), and the Philippines against Trump's visit.

We call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. military bases, personnel, agreements, exercises, war games, and all other operations from Asia and the Pacific, and for the U.S. government to respect the sovereignty of the countries

of the region, including their right to self-determination. We demand an end to inflammatory rhetoric and anti-people policies of this Trump administration, which has already implemented anti-democratic processes in the United States.

We invite your organization to sign on by endorsing this statement.

Signed:

Nodutdol for Korean Community Development
BAYAN USA

United National Antiwar Coalition

Anakbayan USA

June 15th Joint Declaration Support Committee

Virginia Defenders for Freedom, Justice & Equality

National Lawyers Guild International Committee

Chinatown Community for Equitable Development

NJ State Industrial Union Council

Xicana Moratorium Coalition

Migrante Southern California

(and many more)

JOINT STATEMENT ISSUED

Anti-War Organizations in the U.S., Korea, and Japan Oppose War in Korea

Ahead of Trump's arrival in South Korea as part of his 13-day tour through Asia, hundreds of organizations from Japan, south Korea and the United States issued a joint statement denouncing his policy of sanctions and war threats against north Korea and demanding a halt to military exercises. The joint statement also calls on South Korea's Moon Jae-in administration to pursue inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation and Japan's Abe government to cease moves to change Article 9, the peace clause of its constitution.

"Washington is forcing a trilateral military alliance and provocative war drills on Tokyo and Seoul that threatens North Korea and the region," said Christine Ahn, international coordinator of Women Cross DMZ. "The people of Japan, South Korea and United States oppose war. Our demands are an urgent pivot towards peace."

"In Japan, Prime Minister Abe utilizes the U.S.-North Korea crisis to promote public hysteria and fear and encourage right-wing groups that call for Japan's militarization, including the acquisition of nuclear weapons," explains Yoshioka Tatsuya, Co-Founder and Director of Peace Boat, Japan's largest peace organization. "But we really have to understand that the joint military exercises by the U.S., Japan, and South Korea increase the risk of war in this region. Japan has the experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We have to work to abolish nuclear weapons, but it's unreasonable to demand that north Korea be the only one to give up theirs. All of us, including the U.S. and Japan, must say no to them."

"The South Korean public is highly critical of Trump for making threats of war and dismissing the gravity of its consequences as something 'over there,'" says Choi Eun-a of the

Korean Alliance for Progressive Movements, which is among the 222 south Korean organizations that have called for nationwide protest timed with Trump's visit to South Korea. "The war-threatening, weapons salesman Trump is not welcome here, especially as he demands that south Korea pay more to host U.S. troops and set aside land for useless weapons like the THAAD missile defense system."

"Peace-loving people in the United States, Japan, and South Korea reject the war-mongering policies of our governments and express our friendship and solidarity with the people of North Korea," said Jackie Cabasso, Executive Director of the Western States Legal Foundation in California. "The U.S. government must end its policy of sanctions and military threats against North Korea, cease the deployment of more weapons of mass destruction to the Korean peninsula and the region, and halt large-scale military exercises that impede dialogue with North Korea."

Joint Statement

U.S., South Korean, and Japanese Organizations Call for Peace in Korea and Northeast Asia

As U.S. President Trump travels to Asia, we civil society groups from the United States, South Korea, and Japan call for a diplomatic solution to the dangerous conflict between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). As those who would be directly impacted by the outbreak of such a conflict, we call on our leaders to take bold steps to ensure lasting peace.

Recent events have set the stage for a possible catastrophe on the Korean Peninsula and even throughout the greater Northeast Asian region. Any further escalation of tensions could rapidly

NO TRUMP, NO WAR IN KOREA

degenerate into violence. In its 27 October 2017 report, the U.S. Congressional Research Service estimates that over 300,000 people would die in the opening days of a military conflict on the Korean Peninsula, even without nuclear weapons, and it would ultimately claim 25 million lives.

Even as President Trump calls his predecessor's policy of "strategic patience" on North Korea a failure, he continues the same policy, i.e., intensifying U.N. and unilateral sanctions and military threats. [...] We therefore demand that:

The Trump administration boldly shift to a policy of peace by:

Ending its policy of sanctions and military threats against North Korea;

Ceasing the deployment of more weapons of mass destruction on the Korean peninsula and in the region, and withdrawing the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense system from South Korea as it only exacerbates tensions in the region; and

Halting large-scale military exercises that impede dialogue with North Korea

The administration of President Moon Jae-in of South Korea honor the spirit of past North-South joint declarations for peace and reconciliation by:

Assertively pursuing inter-Korean dialogue and cooperation;

Halting future large-scale U.S.-South Korea combined military exercises to minimize the risk of confrontation ahead of the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyongchang, South Korea; and

No longer cooperating with investments in costly weapon systems with the United States and Japan, including spending on missile defense, which only exacerbates tensions in the region and diverts precious resources away from human needs.

The government of Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe immediately cease all further moves toward military buildup and instead contribute to regional peace by:

Abolishing the controversial "Conspiracy Law" and "State Secrecy Law," as well as the 2015 "Peace and Security Legislation" or war bills which permit the use of the so-called right to collective self-defense;

Pursuing the normalization of relations between Japan and North Korea based upon the principles of the Pyongyang Declaration and the Stockholm Agreement; and

Ceasing moves to change Article 9, the peace clause in its constitution.



These are among the hundreds of organizations who have signed on:

Japan:

Citizens Association against Constitutional Revision
Femin Women's Democratic Club
Japan-Korea People's Solidarity Network
Kyoto/Kinki Association against the U.S. X-band Radar Base
Network of Religious Persons Making Peace
Nonviolent Peaceforce Japan
Peace Boat
Veterans for Peace Japan

South Korea

Federation of Korean Trade Unions
Korean Alliance of Progressive Movements
Korean Confederation of Trade Unions
Korean Peasants League
Korean Street Vendors Confederation
Korean Women's Alliance
Korean Women Peasants Alliance
Korean Youth Solidarity
National Alliance of Squatters and Evictees

United States

Campaign for Peace, Disarmament and Common Security
International Forum on Globalization
Peace Action
Task Force to Stop THAAD in Korea and Militarism in Asia and the Pacific
United for Peace and Justice
Veterans for Peace National
Western States Legal Foundation
Women Cross DMZ

Japan: Protests Against U.S. Military Base in Iwakuni

Yoshio Nakamura, Asia-Wide Campaign (AWC) - Japan

The Asia-Wide Campaign-Japan held its annual demonstration against the U.S. base in Iwakuni on November 25-26, 2017. We are resisting the ongoing, massive consolidation of the base. In the context of the comprehensive realignment plan of the U.S. bases in Japan, the U.S. Iwakuni base, or formally the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, has been intensively consolidated. It includes a massive expansion of the base, the construction of a huge U.S. military housing complex and additional deployment of the F-35 stealth fighters. The U.S. and Japanese governments also plan to transfer 61 fighters from another U.S. base in Japan to Iwakuni by May 2018. According to the plan, the Iwakuni base would become one of the largest U.S. bases in East Asia where around 130 fighters are deployed. Also, around 10,000 U.S. soldiers and their families would stay in Iwakuni, which has a population of 135,000.

The protest at the Iwakuni base also has an important meaning in the context of the recent rising tension on the Korean peninsula. The base is the nearest U.S. Marine base to Korea.

It would be a major launching pad for U.S. and Japanese forces against Korea.

People in Iwakuni clearly showed their opposition in a referendum when the consolidation plan of the base was announced by the governments of the United States and Japan in 2006. Since then, they have continuously opposed the planned consolidation of the base. The AWC-Japan has held annual anti-base demonstrations since 2006 in solidarity with the struggling people of Iwakuni.

Activists in different areas will join the two-day program this year in Iwakuni. They will show their opposition to U.S. bases, stressing their opposition to the increasing U.S.-Japanese warmongering against the DPRK.

The main slogans of the program are as follows:

- *No to consolidation of the U.S. Iwakuni base!*
- *Resist U.S.-Japanese military alliance!*
- *No new Korean War!*
- *U.S. troops, out of Asia!*

U.S. WARMONGERING IN ASIA

Anti-War Protests Greet Trump in Korea

On November 7 and 8, President Donald Trump visited the Republic of Korea (ROK) for the third U.S.-ROK Summit as part of an 11-day Asian tour which included visits to Japan, China, Vietnam and the Philippines. Trump's visit to south Korea was opposed by more than 200 organizations, which demanded peace on the Korean peninsula.

On November 4, the groups held a "No Trump, No War People's Rally" at the U.S. embassy in Seoul to launch their protests. Despite their attempts, the Seoul police were unable to prevent the protesters from getting to the U.S. embassy. In their joint press conference the organizers pointed out: "Who can possibly welcome a foreign leader who talks about the possibility of a war on their land? We should take the path of peace, not war. We cannot help but protect peace on our land and our livelihood for ourselves."

The demonstrators demanded that the U.S. stop the aggressive military exercises that threaten the Korean Peninsula, cease pressuring and imposing sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and remove all terminal high altitude area defense (THAAD) missile installations from Korean soil. They also demanded that the U.S. stop forcing the ROK to purchase larger and larger amounts of U.S. weapons.

Many of the protests also called for the scrapping of the onerous U.S.-ROK Free Trade Agreement (KORUS), which has permitted the domination of the south Korean economy by U.S. monopolies at the expense of the livelihoods, and economic future of the people.

While the monopoly media in Canada and elsewhere sensationalized Trump's provocative and irresponsible comments against the DPRK during his visit, less mentioned was that Trump's visit to south Korea was aimed primarily at strengthening the aggressive U.S.-south Korea military alliance. To make that point clear, U.S.-south Korea-Japan military drills involving three aircraft carriers — the USS Ronald Reagan, the USS Theodore Roosevelt and the USS Nimitz — were timed to coincide with Trump's visit. These war exercises continue with air and naval maneuvers near the Northern Limit Line, the U.S.-imposed maritime border on the West Sea dividing north and south Korea.

It is important to note that throughout all these aggressive military acts and crimes against the peace on the part of the U.S., the ROK and Japan, the DPRK has exercised restraint and soberly called for the U.S. and its allies to end these provocative acts while at the same time taking defensive measures against possible attacks.

One of the outcomes of the summit was that ROK President Moon committed to purchasing billions of dollars more of U.S. weapons -- including F-35A Joint Strike Fighters, KF-16 fighters, Patriot PAC-3 ballistic missile upgrades, Apache heavy attack helicopters, Global Hawk high-altitude drones and Aegis combat systems. Moon's pledge to buy more weapons goes beyond the commitment already made under the previous Park Geun-hye government to increase imports of U.S. weapons by \$215 billion between 2016 and 2020. President Moon has pledged to increase

south Korea's defense spending by seven per cent annually to 2022. Next year alone the defense budget will be increased by almost U.S.\$40 billion.

Two members of south Korea's National Assembly refuse to applaud Trump's warmongering speech, November 8, 2017, while a mass demonstration takes place outside.

All this does not bode well for peace on the Korean peninsula. The strengthening of the U.S.-south Korea military alliance through increased war exercises aimed at regime change in the DPRK, and increased purchases of U.S. weapons, the strengthening of the U.S. military occupation of south Korea and the continuing imposition of U.S. military command in the event of war on the Korean peninsula, is a crime against the Korean people and a violation of their right to live in peace.

The U.S. imperialists have been a curse on the Korean people. Since the unilateral and forced division of Korea by the U.S. in 1945, the Korean people have not had a moment's peace. It is noteworthy that from the time of the division of Korea, the Korean people in

the north and south have worked tirelessly for peace on the Korean Peninsula and the reunification of their nation. The reception given Donald Trump on his recent Korean visit shows the whole world that the Korean people, despite all the obstacles put in their way since 1945, through the U.S.-instigated Korean War to the present, have not for a moment given up their just struggle for peace, reunification and self-determination.

It is vital that the peace-loving U.S. people and peoples around the world do their duty and step up their actions against the U.S. war drums being beaten once again on the Korean Peninsula under the pretext that the DPRK is a threat to peace. By taking a stand for peace on the Korean Peninsula, the U.S. people will assist the Korean people in their just struggle to oust the U.S. imperialists from their country and achieve the peace and reunification they so ardently desire.

U.S. Troops Out of Korea!

U.S. — Sign a Peace Treaty with the DPRK!

No to THAAD Missiles in S. Korea! Hands Off the DPRK!

U.S. Bans Entry of South Korean Youth Organizing Against Trump's War Threats in Korea

United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC)

Fourteen members of the Fellowship of South Korean Youth — calling themselves the “Ban Trump's Crazy Action” (BTC) delegation — were stopped at Incheon airport on October 25 and prevented from boarding their planes to the United States, where they had planned to protest Trump's war threats in Korea. The group, which had planned to visit New York, Washington DC, and Los Angeles to demand an end to U.S. sanctions and war threats against North Korea, was turned away despite having acquired proper documentation to visit the United States.

The members of the delegation were told by the United Airline staff that there were problems with their visas. When the delegation asked for an explanation, they were told, “You need to find out why from the U.S. Embassy in Seoul. Due to privacy concerns, we cannot release any information.”

Following their entry denial, the BTC delegation held a press briefing at Incheon Airport. One representative of the delegation stated, “We received our visas through the proper channels, but suddenly our visas were rejected. We don't understand what is so free about the so-called ‘land of the free.’ Every member of the BTC delegation is furious about this.”

Every member of the delegation had received an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorization) approval. According to the delegation, there was no further explanation from the airline staff as to why the visas they had received were denied. Later, the delegation members found out that their ESTA approval's were canceled prior to checking in to their flights.

One of the members of the delegation took a separate flight and managed to arrive at JFK International Airport in New York before being detained without telephone access and deported back to South Korea the next day.

U.S. anti-war/peace activists, including the Task Force to Stop

THAAD in Korea & Militarism in Asia and the Pacific and Nodutdol for Korean Community Development released a joint statement denouncing the U.S. government's decision to ban the entry of the South Korean activists:

“As organizations and individuals who advocate open borders, freedom of speech, and peaceful resolution of international conflicts, we strongly protest the U.S. entry ban of the members of BTC and demand a full explanation for this action and immediate reversal of this decision. We also forcefully oppose the Trump administration's escalation of tension with North Korea, fully support South Korean peacemakers mobilizing to protest Trump's visit to their country and preparing for mass demonstrations on November 4th, and stand in solidarity with all people — Koreans, U.S., and others throughout the world — unconditionally committed to preventing a second Korean War.”

The list of organizations endorsing the statement include CODEPINK, Peace Action, US Labor Against the War, Veterans For Peace, the United National Antiwar Coalition (UNAC), among many others.



Joint Statement on President Trump's Visit to Japan and South Korea

International Association of Democratic Lawyers

On the occasion of the visit of US president Trump to Japan and South Korea, we demand an end to the US- DPRK escalation in military threats.

On September 19, 2017, in his first appearance before the United Nations, President Donald Trump threatened to totally destroy North Korea, showing absolute contempt and disregard for all the reasons the peoples of the world united in 1945 to establish the United Nations. In the preamble of the Charter, the peoples of the United Nations state:

“WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

- to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and

- to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and

- to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

- to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

AND FOR THESE ENDS

- to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and

- to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

In furtherance of these purposes “All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered.” And “All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.”

The only exception to the use of force is in self-defense in response to an armed attack from another country, and only until the Security Council can act to restore international peace and security.

With respect to Korea, the United States has never complied with the terms of the 1953 armistice. The Armistice called for the parties to meet to conclude a formal peace treaty. This has never happened. The armistice called for the removal of foreign troops from the peninsula. The Chinese troops left in the 1950's.

The United States still has 28,500 troops in South Korea and South Korea has built the world's largest US military base on Jeju Island. In fact, contrary to the initial promises that the base would not be used as a strategic outpost by the US military, US naval vessels often enter ports at the Gangjeong Naval Base. The armistice called for no new weapons being introduced into either country. The United States put nuclear weapons in South Korea and although they were later removed, the United States has been selling billions of dollars of arms to South Korea each year. The United States over opposition of peace and other progressive activists in South Korea has promoted the installation of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense or THAAD system in South Korea using as cover the current war of words.

There needs to be a permanent peace treaty on the peninsula.

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), the National Lawyers Guild (NLG), the Japan Lawyers International Solidarity Association (JALISA), the US Military Issues Committee of Lawyers for a Democratic Society (MINBYUN) and the Confederation of Lawyers of Asia and the Pacific (COLAP), support the development of a peace treaty between North and South Korea as a main way to promote peace and stability in the region.

Furthermore, we demand of President Trump of the U.S., President Moon Jae-in of South Korea, Prime Minister Abe of Japan, as follows:

1. Stop acting recklessly with continuing threats of war.
2. Do not use the military bases in South Korea and Japan to threaten North Korea to heighten the crisis on the Korean peninsula.
3. President Moon Jae-in and Prime Minister Abe Shinzo should not allow the deployment of strategic assets such as U.S. nuclear carriers, strategic bombers, and nuclear submarines, including the THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) deployment
4. In addition, the U.S.-ROK joint military exercises that deploy a U.S. strategic weapon in accordance with a pre-emptive nuclear strike threatening North Korea must be stopped immediately
5. Moon Jae-in should act as a mediator to promote dialogue and negotiations that will permanently end the military confrontation between North Korea and the United States. In the process, it will be necessary to revive the July 4 South-North Joint Statement, the June 15 South-North Joint Statement, and the October 4 South-North Declaration, and end the worn-out confrontation in accordance with that spirit and achieve the improvement of inter-Korean relations.

6. Abe Shinzo should give up the strategy to deter North Korea with the U.S. and be a fair mediator to promote dialogue with the spirit of Article 9 in the Japanese peace constitution. [Article 9 forbids Japan from having troops abroad and engaging in aggression — BF Ed. Note]

We call on the international community to raise its voice against these provocations and drills with mighty U.S. military power generated by the US military bases in Asia, the Pacific

and in the world.

November 6th, 2017.

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), Confederation of Lawyers of Asia and the Pacific (COLAP), Japan Lawyers International Solidarity Association (JALISA), US Military Issues Committee of Lawyers for a Democratic Society (Minbyun), National Lawyers Guild (NLG)

Trump Faces Anti-Imperialist Protests in the Philippines

Ruth Lumibao, Bulatlat.com

Numerous organizations conducted several rallies on November 12, in time for the arrival in the Philippines of U.S. President Donald Trump and other state leaders attending the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) summit which started November 13.

In Manila, protesters led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) confronted several battalions of anti-riot police even as they took side streets in an attempt to get near the U.S. embassy. In one area, a group of protesters led by the youth clashed with policemen who attempted to disperse them with a water cannon. At least 20 were hurt. The demonstrators proceeded to hold their program near Plaza Ferguson, a few meters away from the U.S. embassy.

“Our country would be better off without Trump’s visit because aside from pushing and supporting more military actions in the Philippines, like more airstrikes especially in Mindanao, he is also engaged in rabid saber-rattling in the Korean Peninsula that would have terrible effects in the Philippines if war breaks out,” Bayan Muna Representative Carlos Zarate said in a statement.

Other participants also condemned neoliberal policies and a plan to increase rice importation in the Philippines. Speakers warned against the liberalization of the economy, which will lead to a greater number of irregular and contractual workers with low wages. Heightened military intervention and aid also result in greater human rights violations and more intensive counterinsurgency programs.

As one brought out, “The neoliberal pillars of ASEAN, such as deregulation and privatization are historically proven to throw Filipino poor into a cycle of poverty and misery, and at present with U.S. President Trump’s attendance, the world is being pushed to the brink of a nuclear war via his aggressive threats against North Korea.”

Simultaneous with the ASEAN summit gala, about 30 members of various youth organizations conducted a rally in front of the Mall of Asia (MOA) globe in Pasay City.

JP Rosos, spokesperson of the League of Filipino Students (LFS), and stressed how world leaders, especially the Philippine government have the gall to spend billions on the ASEAN summit and the gala while Filipino citizens hardly have any access to basic social services.

In Mendiola bridge near the Presidential Palace, another group

held a “homeless dinner” at the camp of demolished residents of the Manggahan Pasig Floodway, in contrast to what they called “lavish” ASEAN gala dinner.

A protest was also held in Angeles, Pampanga before Trump’s arrival in the Clark International Airport. Central Luzon is one of the regions that will be primarily affected by the liberalization of trade in the Philippines, given that it is the “rice capital” of the Philippines, formerly the principal export product of the Philippines.

In a statement, BAYAN – Central Luzon cited how neoliberal policies will result in the conversion of agricultural and productive lands into mega-cities and expressways for commercial and private use. Lands in Pampanga and Clark will also be converted into military bases to be utilized by the armed forces of the United States.

“We believe, and we have proof, that the worsening widespread hunger and poverty experienced by our toiling masses is brought by neoliberal policies of imperialist countries, led and controlled by the imperialist United States,” Roman Polintan, chairperson of BAYAN-Central Luzon said.

Women Say ‘No’ to Trump, Neoliberal Policies

Previously, on November 9 Filipino women showed that Trump is not welcome in the Philippines. Gabriela, a women’s organization, led the rally against neoliberal policies being pushed by the United States. Carrying banners exhorting women to take a stand against neoliberal globalization, militarism and war, protesters marched to the U.S. Embassy in Manila. Anti-riot police blocked the mostly women marchers along UN avenue, blocks away from the embassy along Roxas Boulevard. Members of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) from Burma, Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Indonesia joined their Filipino counterpart in the protest.

Joms Salvador, Gabriela secretary general said Asian women and their families are bearing the brunt of decades of implementation of liberalization of local economies and aggressive buyouts of state enterprises by global corporations. They suffer the social costs of landlessness, job insecurity, poverty and militarism, she said. [...]

Similar protests were held by activists in South Korea and Japan where Trump had earlier visited as part of his 12-day Asian trip.