



No to US/NATO military bases Conference report

Dublin November 2018

THE first International Conference “No to US/NATO Military Bases” took place in Dublin 16th - 18th November. Held in Liberty Hall, 300 delegates from at least 35 countries, including Cuba, Belgium, the Congo, USA, Czech Republic, Kenya, South Africa, Israel, Italy, Japan, Columbia, Palestine, Britain, Germany and Australia, Portugal, Turkey, Argentina, Greece and of course Ireland. They represented the World Peace Council and various peace organisations throughout the world as well as some political parties.

Dr Aledia Guevara received a warm welcome from the participants, she was a keynote speaker on Saturday morning, she called for the closing of Guantanamo its return to the rightful owners, the people of Cuba, after 115 years.

Dr. Akel Taqal from Palestine was refused a visa. Roger Cole of PANA stated his anger when he said, “this state has refused a visa to one of our guest speakers invited to this major global peace conference, Dr Akel Tazez, Chairperson of Palestinian Peace and Solidarity Committee in Israel,

yet over the last 15 years over three million US troops have been allowed to land at Shannon Airport on their way to Intervention Wars in the Middle East.” It is understood that the Irish Government had also refused visas to delegates from the Philippines and Serbia.

The media ignored the event and Tom Crilly of Peace And Neutrality Alliance told the conferences that all the media had been contacted. He congratulated the *Belfast Newsletter* which was the only “corporate” newspaper to give a pre conference report.

The United States had strong representation at the conference. One speaker told the delegates said that Republican Party candidates for Congress are being recruited on the basis of military background; they also spoke about the environmental damage, the human cost and the monetary cost of military bases.

In money terms an estimated \$150 billion per year is spent on bases and personnel abroad, \$51.5 billion to build and maintain infrastructure abroad. There figures are hard to put into real life but half of \$51.5 billion spent on

bases would mean 450,000 infrastructure jobs, or 300,000 elementary school jobs.

The conference heard that since 1980 US bases have been used at least 23 times to launch wars of military interventions in 14 countries in the Middle East alone. The collaboration between the EU and NATO was well documented and the preparation of an EU army was condemned.

There are in the region of over 1,000 US and NATO bases in 80 or more countries throughout the world. There are 181 sites in Germany, 122 in Japan, 83 in South Korea, and 50 in Italy. The Pentagon figure of 701 base sites omits bases in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Niger, Kosovo, Kuwait and the secretive bases in Israel and Saudi Arabia.

A map of Iran showing it to be surrounded by over 34 US bases, was projected onto the screen, with the comment “*See how close Iran puts their country to US bases. Such provocation!*”

Reports from around the world were given by activists who have fought to stop US/NATO bases be-

ing built resulting in of varying types of civil disobedience, and imprisonment.

The eroding of Irish Neutrality, US military use of Shannon, actions by PANA, Shannon Watch, Galway Alliance Against War, and the Peoples Movement were all on the agenda. Regional meetings were held on the Sunday afternoon and proposals from these meetings will be posted on the above web page.

A statement of unity against US/NATO bases was agreed at the end of the conference. Some action dates included protests in Washington DC on the 4th of April, the 70th anniversary of the formation of NATO. On the 4th of May there will be a major conference in Cuba, in Guantanamo calling for the USA to return the land to the Cuban people. Protests on the 6th and 9th of August the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The conference gave people the opportunity to meet share experiences and build on anti-imperialist action. This is crucial as we do not hear of these actions in the capitalist media. (LW)

The conference was organised by Peace And Neutrality (Ireland) and Coalition Against US Foreign Military Bases (USA)



Asia Pacific/
Pivot to
Asia/Okinawa

These photographs & report give a glimpse into the work of anti-war activist attending the conference on the 16th 18th November in Dublin.

For more information go to the website pages of the above organisations and www.wpc-in.org

Lynda Walker

Communist Party of Ireland

Activists in
Japan/Okinawa face prison
sentences



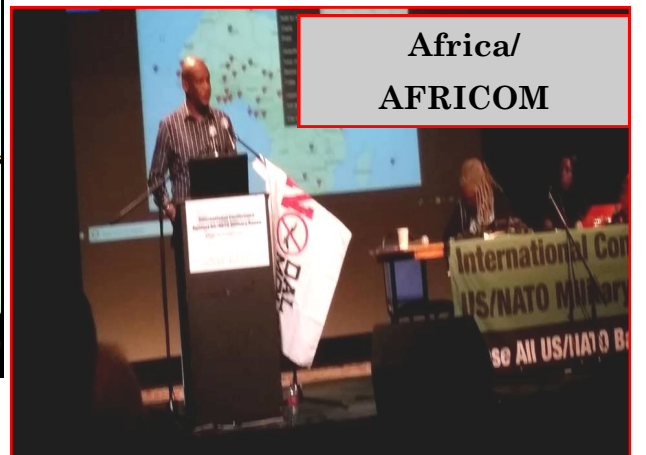
Conference Delegates
Rally outside the GPO Dublin

CODEPINK: Women for Peace (USA)
Medea Benjamin speaking on the
Middle East: US/NATO plan



One of the speakers: South Africa
Chris Matlhako

Africa/
AFRICOM



Keynote speaker Aledia Guevara