

Day of Action to Confront US Militarism in the Americas October 11, 2010

Our organizations urge you to join us in a National Day of Action to Confront US Militarism in the Americas on Monday, October 11, 2010. October 11 is the day the **United States “celebrates” the beginning of the European invasion of the Americas and when indigenous peoples mark as the 518th year of resistance to invasion and colonialism.**

We represent Latin America solidarity and peace groups. We are initiating and urge others to undertake the formation of local and regional coalitions – across movements for indigenous rights, immigrant justice, fair trade, peace, human rights, labor rights, gender justice, drug policy reform and other urgent goals – to **confront the growing militarism** of our culture and budget, the increasing propensity to commit national resources to wars of aggression, the destruction of Mother Earth by military actions, and the militarization of U.S. foreign policy, especially in Latin America.

We are **calling on local coalitions** to organize creative, strong actions consistent with these themes and issues of concern in your area. In border regions, actions might focus on **militarization of the border and immigration policy**. In urban areas, actions might focus on the **militarization of law enforcement and prisons**. In areas with major military contractors, actions might focus on **war for profit**, and in areas where there are military bases that act as staging areas for troop deployment to other countries, actions could focus on **de-funding war and bringing the troops home now**.

There is no city, town, or hamlet in the United States that does not have some connection to the war machine. We urge and support the organizing of myriad creative, coordinated **actions on October 11 to draw attention to that fact and to imperative to redirect resources to meet domestic needs left wanting due to our nation’s expenditures on war.**

You will be able to list and promote your local action on the LASolidarity.org webpage. For organizing materials you can adapt for your local needs go to www.LASolidarity.org. To have your local organizing materials posted so that others can adapt them, send them to info@lasolidarity.org.

Background

The **United States** spends as much on its war-making capabilities as the rest of the world combined. It has **nearly 1,000 military facilities on foreign soil**. It is engaged in wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and supporting armed conflict in Pakistan, Somalia, Philippines, Mexico, Colombia, Palestine, and other countries. And it is threatening war against Iran.

The **Obama administration has accelerated the militarization** of US relations with Latin America, virtually erasing the goodwill with which Latin Americans welcomed the

change of government in Washington. In June the United States signed an agreement with the government of Costa Rica – a pacifist nation that outlawed its army in 1948 – allowing unrestricted access for 7,000 Marines from 46 ships, armed with missiles, 200 helicopters, and other assault weapons; numbers totally disproportionate and inappropriate for official claims that it is to fight the drug war. This mobilization follows a basing agreement with Colombia for the use of seven bases; the recognition of a coup government and construction of a new naval base in Honduras; continued expansion of the U.S. military base in Curacao just over the horizon from Venezuela's oil fields; and the military response to Haiti's devastating earthquake in January 2010.

The goals for the Oct. 11 Day of action are to support:

1. Cancellation of the threatening and unnecessary U.S. military exercises in Costa Rica
2. Closing the School of the Americas (now Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation)
3. Ending the U.S. military presence on bases in Colombia, Honduras, Guantanamo, and elsewhere in hemisphere.
4. Ending the Merida Initiative and the increased militarization of the US border with Mexico
5. The proposal by Rep. Barney Frank to start reducing the social debt by cutting the US military budget immediately by 25%

Local coalitions are invited include their own goals for planned actions.

This Call is issued by members of the Latin America Solidarity Coalition and other organizations working for peace and justice. (www.LASolidarity.org).