

America versus the Middle East

The Middle East and New US Military Policies

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This article examines the relationship between the Middle East and the new military policies of the United States from the point of view of the peace movements. It is based on the concept that, at present, the United States relies mainly on its military power to impose its conditions on the process of globalisation. This serves its interests globally and regionally. If its allies refuse to follow suit, the United States will act unilaterally. Big powers can compete globally with the United States in the economic field, and within the framework of the international division of labour. But they cannot compete militarily, as the United States alone can act globally, while all others act regionally

Introduction

The security environment, worldwide and in all regions, changed totally with the end of the Cold War and the dismantling of the Soviet Union. A gradual transformation of this environment had been under way since 1990, and led to the adoption of new military policies by George W. Bush's administration. They are incorporated in two main documents: the 'Nuclear Posture Review' and the 'National Security Strategy of the United States'. Nuclear confrontations in the North between the United States and Russia (the former Soviet Union) have receded. They are now emerging in regions in the South and East, mainly in the Middle East, South Asia and North East Asia. In addition, the United States has adopted a very aggressive policy. It levels threats to launch pre-emptive wars and possibly to use low-yield nuclear weapons in military operations, on its own decision, and with utter disregard for international law, the United Nations Charter and its institutions, and multilateral agreements.

But these new policies on the part of the United States did not emerge in a vacuum. Several military infrastructures, which are among the basic elements of their foundation, had been built up during the previous Clinton administrations. These are being rearranged and integrated, at present, to suit the implementation of these new policies. Astonishingly, these infrastructures were the result of lessons drawn from military operations undertaken in the Middle East (South West Asia). Principal among them are the following: United States clandestine military operations using US arms and special units in support of the Islamic Mujahideen against the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan; in 1991, the Gulf war against Iraq, led by United States; and the Israeli military operations against the Palestinian people and Arab countries.

Lessons drawn from Middle East wars

First, the Middle East region assumes a special character. Only one country in the region has acquired nuclear weapons. Nuclear deterrence is unilateral and not mutual, a matter which has led to far-reaching consequences. Egypt and several Arab countries refused to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention, concluded in Paris in January 1989, due to Israel's refusal to accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

As a result of Israel's insistence on retaining its nuclear capabilities, other states in the region seek every opportunity to acquire weapons of mass destruction to counter Israel's deadly nuclear threats. A new development has emerged. The elimination of nuclear weapons in the Middle East must be expanded to cover all weapons of mass destruction.

In response to this development, Israel has decided to use force against any country of the region which may try to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Sixteen Israeli bombers destroyed the Iraqi Osirak reactor in 1981. Richard Cheney gave thanks for the bold dramatic action that had been taken by Israel to destroy the Iraqi reactor.¹

If Iraqi attempts to acquire nuclear weapons had succeeded, nuclear threats could have levelled at each other by the parties involved in the Gulf War. This horrible situation might, in fact, have led to the prevention of the war, and other means could have been sought to solve the problem. To prevent such an eventuality, the United States initiated its Counter Proliferation policy. This openly advocates the use of force combined with nuclear deterrence against any country hostile to US policies which may try to acquire weapons of mass destruction that could be used to deprive the United States and its transnational corporations of their interests. In 1996, the then Secretary of Defence in the Clinton administration, William Perry, highlighted the importance of Counter Proliferation when he said, 'In deterring this (weapons of mass destruction) threat, we depend both on a strong conventional military force and smaller, but still powerful, nuclear force. In our Nuclear Posture Review, we reaffirmed the importance of maintaining nuclear weapons as a deterrent. But I would like to point out that both our conventional and nuclear force, as deterrents, not only must be strong, but it must be perceived that the US has the will power to use that strength'.²

The deadly threats levelled by Israeli nuclear weapons had induced several countries in the region to seek every possibility to acquire weapons of mass destruction. Consequently, the United States may use force combined with nuclear deterrence against them to prevent nuclear proliferation, while, as usual, it will leave Israeli weapons intact. This double standard policy is one of the main pillars of new US military strategy adopted by the Bush administration in the Middle East.

Second, during the 1991 Gulf War, the United States used the Patriot missile system to neutralise Scud missiles launched by Iraq. Actually, both systems failed to function successfully due to their technological defects. But the lesson

was drawn. After the war, the United States started to produce and deploy more advanced Theatre Missile Defence systems in the Middle East in co-operation with Israel in order to kill the missiles of their adversaries. Consequently, the skies over the Middle East will be opened to US and Israeli missiles to hit any target in any country in the region. Israel acquired the advanced US Patriot 3 systems, and together with the United States jointly produced the Arrow system which can defend the entire Israeli territories.³ In 1994, the Clinton administration also decided to conduct joint tests with Israel to develop laser technology and to produce a laser system⁴ which can kill very short range missiles launched by the *Hezb Allah* organisation from Lebanon across the Israeli border.

The United States also concluded an agreement with Russia on 'Theatre Missile Defence'. This covers limited areas in various regions and deals with 'killing' medium and short range missiles carrying weapons of mass destruction which might be launched by other states hostile to US interests. The agreement was concluded at a meeting between Clinton and Yeltsin in Helsinki on March 22, 1997.⁵

Under the Clinton administration, the United States also started to develop a National Missile Defense system to defend the entire US territories and to deploy weapons in space. This step has led to the abrogation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty by the Bush administration. Putting weapons in space is the final step in the National Missile Defence and Theatre Missile Defence deployments. Space is to be added as the fourth dimension after land, sea and air for weapon deployments. It will allow the United States to project power over our entire planet. The US military's *Long Range Plan*, which documents the construction of ballistic missile defence systems, stresses that globalisation of the world economy will continue, with a widening gap between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. It declares that 'our nation's increasing dependence upon space capabilities, both militarily and economically, produces a related vulnerability that will not go unnoticed by adversaries. US interests and investments in space must be fully protected to ensure our nation's freedom of action in space'.⁶ Thus, the second pillar of the Bush administration's new military policies is already available.

Third, a nuclear capable Rapid Deployment Force was established in the 1980s, comprising more than 300,000 US soldiers on sea, land and in the air. A United States Central Command was established to take charge of all operations undertaken by this force in the vast areas from Pakistan in the East to North Africa in the West, and from the Horn of Africa in the South up to Central Asia.⁷ Military facilities for the Rapid Deployment Force were provided by Morocco, Liberia, Egypt, Kenya and Oman, in addition to bases in Spain, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kuwait, with Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean as its central base.⁸ These are the areas where almost all military operations currently undertaken by the Bush administration are taking place.

In the 1980s, special units assigned to the United States Central Command undertook secret operations in Lebanon. But the main operations undertaken by

them were in Afghanistan in order to counter the Soviet invasion. Usually their operations are conducted secretly, in connection with low-intensity conflicts. Now, they are among the main components of the United States military build-up to attack the so-called rogue states and terrorist groups. Paradoxically, the same Mujahideen groups in Afghanistan, formerly identified by the United States as 'freedom fighters' and clandestinely trained by its special units, now form the main bulk of the Al-Qaeda terrorist network.

All these military structures are now part and parcel of the new military policies of the United States. Without them, such policies could not be planned and implemented.

A question may be raised: would a Democratic administration change Bush's military policies in the future? One should recall that the Clinton administration ignored the United Nations and relied totally on Nato to conduct the military operations against Yugoslavia; it undermined the United Nations authority by inserting spies into the UN inspection mission in Iraq; for many years, together with the government of the United Kingdom, it has bombarded Iraq without United Nations authorisation. In addition, the United States initiated the Counter Proliferation strategy and reactivated missile defence systems. A Democratic Party administration may create a better political environment in which to resist the new military policies of the United States, but it will pursue the same policies, possibly without the extravagancies of the Bush team. The resistance to these policies should continue unabated.

The new military policies of the United States

It is perhaps more accurate to speak of the new stage of United States post-cold war military policies. The Nuclear Posture Review and the National Security Strategy of the United States furnish the landmark texts of this stage. The latter develops the former, but both harp on the same theme: United States military domination in order to control the process of globalisation and to entrench its interests world-wide and in all regions. Together they include the following main components.

First, nuclear confrontation between the United States and Russia has receded. A reduction of nuclear weapons can be accepted without impairing the security of the United States. Both states recently agreed to reduce their nuclear weapons to between 1700 and 2200 by the year 2012. But 2000 US nuclear warheads will be put in to storage so that they can be re-linked to their missiles if relations deteriorate with Russia or another state.⁹ The Honourable Douglas J. Feith, Under-secretary of Defence, said during a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee that this reduction 'is not to imply that we will not retain significant nuclear capabilities, or that we can ignore developments in Russia's (or any other nation's) nuclear arsenal. Nuclear capabilities will continue to be essential to our security, and that of our friends and allies'.¹⁰ It should be noted that he did not refer only to Russia, but also to 'other nations' which may not succumb fully to US diktat.

This position is clearly stated in the Nuclear Posture Review. The National Security Strategy stresses that the United States ‘enjoys a position of unparalleled military strength, and possesses unprecedented – and unequalled – strength and influence in the world’, and states that this advantage should be maintained. It speaks about ‘*American internationalism* that reflects the union of our values and our national interests’. It emphasises that ‘the great strength of this nation must be used to promote a balance of power that favours freedom’. But freedom as expressed in the National Security Strategy always connects to ‘free trade and the free market’¹¹, which should be completely open to US corporations. Moreover, the national security of the United States is not confined to its national state or its region. It is global and covers the entire planet, with several positions, each appropriate to each region. In other words, it is concerned with the security of the interests of the United States of America and its transnational corporations and banks. Actually, as we have seen, the United States is the only state which can act globally as a military power. Others can act only regionally. Therefore, a special role is assigned to the United States: unprecedented...unequalled...unparalleled...forces to impose American interests all over the world. In 2003, the Bush administration will spend \$396 billion on its war machine. This is more than six times larger than the military budget of Russia, and more than four times what all the European Union countries together spend on arms. It is also 293 times greater than the military budget of Iraq, the country Bush claims is a threat to US security.¹²

This is *American internationalism*.

Second, new adversaries are emerging in several regions to contest United States interests . They are small and medium states whose national interests collide with those of the United States and its corporations. The Nuclear Posture Review named them. They are all located thousands of miles from the United States, and they are non-nuclear weapon states. But the United States claims that they are threatening its security because, according to its assessment, they are trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction. This is an objective which a few states may try to achieve in order to counter the deadly threats of nuclear capable forces deployed in their regions by United States and its local allies (Israel).

To respond to the new political environment, the United States is rearranging, integrating and developing its military infrastructure. The confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union was based on threats to use strategic nuclear weapons against each other. These were to be delivered by a Triad comprising strategic bombers, land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, and submarine-based long range missiles. The new Triad, revealed in the Nuclear Posture Review of 2002, is gradually emerging on the basis of the capability of a variety of military systems, and not only on the basis of nuclear weapons. These include conventional and non-conventional weapons (all weapons of mass destruction), and offensive and defensive systems (mainly anti-ballistic missile systems), and a revitalised defence infrastructure that will provide new capabilities in a timely fashion to meet emerging threats and surprise

developments. This will include advanced systems of information and intelligence for command and control to bind the three branches of the new Triad, and to respond to unpredicted eventualities.¹³

This posture is not confined to *threats* made against each other by the United States and Russia (the former Soviet Union). Its nature is that of an operational *capability* of vastly diversified military systems, with the involvement of many powers, as well as medium-sized, small and non-state actors (terrorists). It is very complex. Its course is unpredictable and therefore requires very advanced information and intelligence technology to identify unexpected targets.

Deterrence based on the mutually assured destruction of both the United States and the Soviet Union by nuclear weapons was the only goal of the old Triad. But the new Triad aims at achieving four targets: to *assure* the United States and its allies of their security, to *dissuade* adversaries from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, to *deter* possible attacks, and to *defeat* adversaries if necessary.¹⁴ That is the reason for integrating conventional and non-conventional weapons and defensive and offensive systems together with advanced information and intelligence to provide capabilities necessary to achieve the four goals. The reason for building up these capabilities for the new Triad is the failure of deterrence alone to fully guarantee the security of United States interests.

Sophisticated concepts of deterrence are being developed. In an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, Donald H. Rumsfeld, US Defence Secretary, said: 'During the Cold War, our aim was to prevent one hostile power from using an arsenal of existing weapons against us. In the 21st century, the challenge is to deter multiple potential adversaries not only from using existing weapons, but also to dissuade them from developing dangerous new capabilities in the first place. Just as we intend to build 'layered defences' to deal with missile threats at different stages, we also need a strategy of 'layered deterrence' that can deal with a variety of emerging threats at different stages.' He also said 'we need to fashion military capabilities for the new century that, by their very existence, dissuade potential adversaries from investing significant resources into a range of dangerous new capabilities. This is the case with ballistic missile defenses, which along with nuclear deterrence, diplomacy, arms control, non-proliferation and counter-proliferation, will be an important layer in our deterrence strategy.' He added 'In sum, missile defences are just one element of a larger new framework for 21st century deterrence – but a critical part.'¹⁵

In addition to all these changes of military doctrine and infrastructure, the possible use of nuclear weapons in actual operations is not excluded. The Nuclear Posture Review openly states: 'Nuclear weapons could be employed against targets able to withstand non-nuclear attack (for example, deep underground bunkers or bio-weapon facilities).'¹⁶ This is only an example. In other words, (low-yield) nukes may be used in case of a surprise development or on another occasion if the situation requires.

Third, since the events of September 2001 in Washington and New York,

discussions in the United States have been dominated by the momentous debate over an effective response to rogue states and terrorist groups. On several occasions, President Bush has referred to launching pre-emptive strikes to prevent threats from such sources. Finally, the new National Security Strategy adopted pre-emptive war as official military doctrine, to be pursued in case deterrence fails to prevent threats levelled by terrorist groups or states hostile to United States interests. The Strategy stresses that the United States ‘will defend the American people and our interests at home and abroad by identifying and destroying the threat before it reaches our border.’¹⁷ The Strategy also speaks about ways and means ‘to support pre-emptive options.’ Important among them is to ‘build better, more integrated capabilities to provide timely and accurate information on threats’...in order to ‘eliminate (them).’

The Strategy blurs completely the difference between rogue states and terrorist groups, stressing that ‘the overlap between states that sponsor terror and those that pursue weapons of mass destruction compels us to action’ and that ‘rogue states and terrorists...rely on acts of terrorism and, potentially, use weapons of mass destruction’.¹⁸ Actually, military operations against Al-Qaeda terrorist groups have boiled down to US attacks against states that provide them with a home (Afghanistan), or states which the US alleges provide them with a home (Iraq, at present, and Sudan in 1998), or attacks with the consent of the relevant governments in states where they secretly find shelter (Yemen).

United States administrations have always undertaken pre-emptive military strikes. This fact is acknowledged by the Strategy, which states: ‘The United States has long maintained the option of pre-emptive actions to counter sufficient threats to our national security’.¹⁹ Yet declaring this option as the official military doctrine of the United States undermines the United Nations Charter and the entire legal system on which relations among states are based. Under the Charter, there are only two circumstances in which the use of force is permissible: ‘in collective or individual self-defence against an actual or imminent armed attack; and when the Security Council has directed or authorised the use of force to maintain or restore international peace and security’.²⁰ Neither of those circumstances exists in the case of Iraq.

The components of the new military policies of the United States contained in the Nuclear Posture Review and the National Security Strategy present the US President with a broad range of military options to be used according to the circumstances. Meanwhile, the United States maintains a huge arsenal of nuclear weapons in case relations with the big powers deteriorate. Dissuasion and new types of deterrence will be used against medium and small adversaries, deploying conventional and non-conventional weapons as well as offensive and defensive systems, together with very advanced command and control and sophisticated armaments. If deterrence failed, pre-emptive strikes could be undertaken to defeat adversaries. All these options could be unilaterally implemented by the United States on its own decision.

In pursuit of its aggressive master plan, the United States has abrogated

multilateral agreements (the Kyoto Environmental Protocol and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty); refused to observe its commitments under other agreements (the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its article six which calls for the elimination of nuclear weapons); blocked the implementation of important agreements (the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Biological Weapons Convention); violated the United Nations Charter (pre-emptive strikes), and on several occasions ignored the Organisation. In sum, the United States is the biggest and most dangerous rogue state.

From the very beginning, the new military policies were focused on the Middle East and South West Asian states. The United States considers five small and medium-sized states to be ‘rogue states’. It could prepare contingency plans to target nuclear weapons at them. Four of these states are located in the Middle East. More could be added to the list. Naming them, the Nuclear Posture Review states: ‘North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Libya are among the countries that could be involved in immediate, potential or unexpected contingencies. All have longstanding hostility toward the United States and its security partners; North Korea and Iraq in particular have been chronic military concerns. All sponsor or harbour terrorists, all have active weapons of mass destruction and missile programmes.’²¹

After the events of September 11, 2001, a military operation was started in Afghanistan and expanded to other states of the region. Thus, the Middle East and South West Asia region, which was the cradle in which the new policies emerged and developed, is now the main arena where they are being implemented.

The lessons of the new military policies of the United States in the Middle East

An approach to this issue by military people would focus on military tactics, strategy and doctrine. Peace movements pursue a political approach, seeking the right tactics and strategy for the peaceful solution of problems. As an objective, peace is not merely the negation of war. It is a process which aims at accumulating conditions in diverse economic, social, political and cultural fields in order to oblige the adversary to accept the rule of law instead of imposing the rule of force. Lessons drawn from the current implementation of the new military policies of the United States in the Middle East and South West Asia region could contribute to efforts made to achieve this objective.

Lesson No. 1

Military operations in the Middle East and South West Asia are of a regional character and are tightly connected to the United States master plan to control the process of globalisation. They started in Afghanistan, where the new head of state favours the interests of the United States. A United States military presence around oil resources in the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia was

accomplished. This step complements the United States military presence in the Arab Gulf states close to their oil resources. Concurrently, the Palestinian *intifada* against Israel's occupation has been treated as terrorist. Efforts are made by both the United States and Israel to install new leaders to run the future Palestinian government. Also, war has been threatened on the Iraqi people to install new rulers who will accept United States control over the huge Iraqi oil reserves. These could provide the United States with eight million barrels each day.

If both targets are attained, then new relations of force will prevail in the region. This will allow the United States to act against Iran or Syria, if they refuse to succumb to its dictates. Consequently, the most appropriate circumstances will be available to impose a political, economic and cultural order on the entire region in favour of the United States, Israel and other local allies. This possible development would be a major contribution to the goal of entrenching United States interests globally.

It goes without saying that it is vitally important to achieve the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, and to prevent the war against the Iraqi people. But the fulfilment of these tasks goes beyond the limits of the national interests of both people. If these struggles were to be successful, a blow would be dealt to the plans of the United States to dominate the entire region. Consequently, this would hamper its global domination. Thus, support for the just causes of the Palestinian and Iraqi peoples will strengthen the struggle of all peace movements regionally and world wide. Even if the United States and its local allies temporarily impose their policies on the entire region, the people will continue to struggle to liberate their countries.

Lesson No. II

Wars in the Middle East are of a new type. Formerly, the possession of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union had prevented them, under the balance of the nuclear terror, from launching war against each other. In the Middle East, the possession of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction leads to military clashes and wars. Instead of eliminating weapons of mass destruction, the United States and Israel are using military force to prevent others from acquiring them, while they insist on maintaining their own weapons to pose deadly threats to other nations. But the production, proliferation and threat or use of weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological) are among the major global problems which could lead, if left unchecked, to the extinction of life on earth. Different from the limited character of former wars, the current wars in the Middle East manipulate global problems and escalate their dangers instead of solving them.

Natural resources, mainly oil, are the subject of major wars in the Middle East. But oil is a depleting resource which will soon vanish. This will lead to another global problem since all human civilisations depend mainly on this source of energy.

In early 2001, Dick Cheney, Vice President of the United States, presented a national energy plan.²² The plan explains the acute oil crisis in the United States in three points: by 2020, the United States will import 17 million barrels of oil every day; it cannot rely only on the traditional sources of supply (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and so on); and it cannot rely only on market forces to gain access to new resources. Thus, the threat or use of force could be needed 'to dissuade hostile forces from attempting to obstruct the flow of petroleum to the United States'.²³ Acquiring oil is no longer confined to the traditional competition among trusts and corporations. It is now a global problem facing all states. This fact explains the intensive efforts of China, India and the other newly rising powers to seize part of the oil resources recently discovered in Sudan and other countries.

The same can be said of water, another vital natural resource. Water shortages are becoming a major global problem. They could lead to conflicts and wars in the Middle East, due to the scarcity of water in the region. In addition, there is the global problem of growing poverty, the marginalisation of broad sections of the population, and the exclusion of entire nations as the result of the current corporate-based globalisation.

The use of force by the United States and its allies to manipulate global problems in order to serve the narrow interests of very limited classes of societies should be replaced by the rational solution of these problems to benefit all people and classes without discrimination. This is humanity's historic task.

Lesson No. III

Although the United States may act unilaterally against its adversaries, it needs the support of local allies in the regions where military operations are undertaken. The military bases and facilities they provide are of vital importance. The military facilities provided by the Central Asian republics and the close co-operation with the rulers of Pakistan were indispensable to ensuring the success of the United States war in Afghanistan. Japan is the principal ally in North East Asia, and India may fulfil that role in South Asia in the future. Israel plays this role in the Middle East, together with several local military bases and facilities provided for the United States Rapid Deployment Force, as we saw earlier.

Israel is a strategic asset for the United States. But it is the United States, as the superpower, which guarantees Israel's security and promotes its interest in the region. Testimony to this fact is given in the close co-operation between the two states in regard to the settlement of the Palestine question, and also by the United States use of force to prevent any regional state from acquiring weapons of mass destruction while condoning Israel's possession of these weapons. Also, the military infrastructures of the armed forces of both states are symmetrical. Both have nuclear weapons, very advanced conventional forces, and missile defence systems. The United States extends financial and technological assistance to the production of Israeli military systems (the Arrow missile defence system²⁴). Both countries co-operate technologically to develop new

arms (the laser weapon²⁵). Israel can easily pursue the new strategy of the United States, based on the new Triad of integrating conventional and non-conventional weapons, and defensive and offensive systems together with advanced command and control. In addition, the pre-emptive wars now officially adopted by the United States have always been an established part of Israeli military doctrine. Similarly, the use of force by the United States to impose its interests mirrors Israeli policy.

However, there is another fact which distinguishes Israel from the United States. Israel is located in the Middle East. Its people will continue to live among the people of the region. Two options are available to Israel. It can either identify its interests with those of the United States, and seek to dominate and exploit the people of the region. Or it can integrate its efforts with those of the other people of the region, to build a different regional order which serves the interests of all the people of the Middle East, and thus strengthen the international struggle against corporate-based globalisation. Those forces in Israel which choose the second option should be supported.

Lesson No. IV

The implementation of the military policies of the United States is already underway in the Middle East and South West Asia region. US military units are freely searching for terrorists in several states of the region. Sharon acts against the Palestinian Liberation Organisation, using the most advanced weapons from the United States and with the blessing of the Bush administration. Preparations are under way to launch wars against Iraq and possibly Iran, and US forces continue their bombardment of Afghanistan.

The only assured way to prevent such grave events, and their consequences, is to eradicate the political, economic and social causes of violence, armed clashes, wars, and acts of terrorism. Principal steps towards this objective would include strengthening international campaigns to eliminate nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction; prohibiting missile tests and missile deployment, both offensive and defensive; and taking effective disarmament measures with respect to various kinds of conventional weapons. In other words, it is necessary to prevent the production and deployment of the weapon systems of the new Triad.

At the regional level, appropriate measures to combat the new military policy of the United States can be taken according to the special conditions of each region. In the Middle East, for example, there is a proposal to transform the region into a zone free from nuclear weapons. Egypt has presented this proposal to the United Nations General Assembly every year since 1974.

By 1990, it had become clear that several states in the region had made efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction in order to counter Israel's deadly nuclear threats. Consequently, Egypt developed its proposal and called for a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

In 1995, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension

Conference adopted a Resolution on the Middle East which ‘calls upon all states in the Middle East to take practical steps in appropriate forums aimed at making progress towards *inter alia*, the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems, and to refrain from taking any measure that precludes the achievement of this objective.’²⁶

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Conference of 2000 confirmed the necessity of implementing this resolution, and requested that Israel adhere to the Treaty and place its nuclear activities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Security Council Resolution 687, which in 1991 recorded the ending of the Gulf War, noted ‘the threat that all weapons of mass destruction pose to peace and security in the area and... the need to work towards the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of such weapons’. Thus, all nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their missiles, offensive and defensive, would be eliminated if the above-mentioned resolution were to be implemented. These are the pillars of the new military policy of the United States. They are used as a pretext by the Bush administration to launch wars in the region.

Another important measure which would hamper the implementation of the new military policy of the United States in the Middle East and South West Asia would be to prevent the US Rapid Deployment Force from using military bases and facilities in the region. The United States military presence mainly in Central Asia and in the Gulf Arab states should come to an end. According to a decision of the Arab League, all Arab states are supposed to commit themselves to refrain from extending support to the United States in a war against Iraq. Every effort should be made to ensure the implementation of this decision as a step towards the dismantling all United States bases and facilities located on Arab territories.

Taking these two steps in the Middle East and the South West Asia region will strongly promote international efforts to foil the new military plans of the United States.

Lesson No. V

American internationalism, which the current United States administration is trying to establish, is fraught with social, economic, political and cultural contradictions. Intensive efforts should be made to benefit from differences and competition among its forces. At the same time, it is vital to develop and strengthen the broad alliances of all forces threatened by US policies in the Middle East and South West Asia region, and to connect them closely to the international mass movements against militarism and wars. The numerous forces and organisations participating in these movements are of various and even different political and social trends, but all are united to defend the rule of law, peace, social justice, equality and for a democratic world order free from hegemony. The diversity and even the spontaneity of their activities do not exclude their joint advance towards these objectives.

The experience of events now under way in the Middle East and South West Asia region shows the diversity and breadth of these forces and organisations:

- The use of force by the United States as the main instrument to entrench its hegemony over national and natural resources of the countries in the region clearly confirms the connection between the struggle against militarism and wars, and the efforts of many forces and non-governmental organisations to defend the inalienable rights of people, environmental systems, democracy and human rights, including political rights, the right to sustainable development and cultural diversity. Forces and constituencies involved in these areas of political, social and cultural activities are among the broad alliances against wars and the new military policies of the United States.
- In the era of globalisation, interdependence characterises relations among local, national, regional and international events and processes. A positive settlement of the Palestine question, and preventing the war against Iraq, would affect regional developments. Indeed, the latter would affect the international situation. With the achievements of the scientific and technological revolution, particularly the very advanced communication and information systems, no country can live behind a Chinese wall. This fact is conducive to new and numerous possibilities to cement relations between national, regional and international peace forces and non-governmental organisations. Networks can be established among them to further their co-operation. Thus, the struggle against military policies and wars can be very much strengthened.
- Wars used to break out, in part, because of socio-economic contradictions between classes and states. Now they flare up because of global problems affecting all classes and societies. Scarcity of water, depletion of natural resources, failure of the planet's capacity to sustain unlimited consumption, the deadly threats posed by weapons of mass destruction affect all sections of the population. Consequently, class forces which traditionally oppose militarism and wars can now rely on very broad sections of the population and even entire societies which strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, a healthy environment, sustainable development and a world order that benefits all people and replaces corporate-based globalisation.
- In sum, co-operation among all these forces, non-governmental organisations and constituencies, local, national, regional and international, which are active in many fields will lead to a *people-based-internationalism* which is able to challenge American internationalism.

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Participants

The following participated in the first Cordoba Dialogue on Peace and Human Rights which took place in the City's Alcazar on 25/26 November 2002.

Rosa Aguilar, Mayor of Cordoba; **Mubarak Al-Mutawa**, International Islamic Committee for Human Rights, Kuwait; **Edy Korthals Altes**, Former Ambassador of the Netherlands, Honorary President of the World Conference of Religions and Peace; **Ammar Bagdash**, Syrian Communist Party; **Wissal Faha Bagdash**, Syrian Communist Party; **Daoud Barakat**, PLO Deputy Commissioner for Jerusalem; **Isaias Barrenada**, Comisiones Obreras (CCOO), Spain; **Amal Basha**, Sisters' Arabic Forum for Human Rights, Yemen; **President Ben Bella**, Algeria; **Ayatollah Bojnoodi**, Islamic Human Rights Commission, Iran; **Douglas Bravo**, writer, Venezuela; **Jose Cabo Bravo**, United Left (IU), Spain; **Michael Barratt Brown**, Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation; **Ken Coates**, Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation; **Ken Fleet**, Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation; **Joseph Gerson**, American Friends Service Committee; **Urban Gibson**, International Peace Bureau, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Sweden; **Faris Glubb**, *Al Arabi* magazine, Kuwait; **Trevor Griffiths**, playwright, Britain; **Ayse Berktaç Hacimirzaoglu**, Peace Initiative, Turkey; **Bahey El Din Hassan**, Cairo Institute for Human Rights; **Antonios Karras**, KEADEA, Greece; **Musa Kaval**, Kurdish National Congress, Brussels; **Dr Elaheh Koolaei MP**, Islamic Human Rights Commission, Iran; **Professor Karin Kulow**, PDS International Committee, Germany; **Shirco Koran**, Iraqi Communist Party representative in Spain; **Natjah Lateef**, Iraqi Communist Party representative in Spain; **Barbara Lindell**, CIVIS, Sweden; **Pedro Marset Campos MEP**, Spain; **Manuel Martorell**, Pamplona Navarra, Spain; **Ahmet Mercan**, Mazlumder Human Rights Organisation, Turkey; **Abla Nasir**, Palestinian NGO Network & Young Women's Christian Association; **Bahig Nassar**, Arab Co-ordination Centre of NGOs, Cairo, and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation; **Mustafa Ozkaya**, Caucasus Foundation, Turkey; **David Partridge**, Movement for the Abolition of War, England; **Alberto Portugheis**, musician, London; **Akbar Esmail Pour**, IPIS, Iran; **Margarita Ruiz**, City of Cordoba; **Farouk Sellami**, Nord-Sud, Geneva; **Michael Simmons**, American Friends Service Committee; **Tony Simpson**, Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation; **Anna Snowden**, Cambridge Peace Group; **Ahmed Soueisi**, Nord-Sud, Geneva; **Sylva Tingerides**, Cyprus Peace Council.