On February 21st 2020, ‘Senior Defense Officials’ from the United States Department of Defense convened a ‘Background Briefing on Nuclear Deterrence and Modernization’. The Briefing was extraordinary for a number of reasons: firstly, because of the level of detail on U.S. nuclear operations; secondly, because these details included the revelation of a ‘war gaming’ exercise focussed on a scenario in which Europe was the ‘battleground’; thirdly, because the ‘war game’ involved the use of low-yield nuclear warheads and fourthly, because of the utterly shameless complacency on display. For example:

“Q: In the scenario that you’ve described, did you say that the Russians had detonated a low yield weapon in their territory?
SDO1: No, on our territory.
Q: OK and what was the U.S. response?
SDO1: The U.S. response was -- I think -- I think I won’t -- I won’t talk about it but it was a limited response. So I don’t want to ...
(CROSSTALK)
Q: Did it go nuclear?
SDO1: Well, yes. They attacked us with a low-yield nuclear. I mean, in the course of the exercise, we simulated responding with a nuclear weapon ...
Q: ... When you say ‘U.S. territory,’ you mean here in the continental U.S. as opposed to U.S. installation overseas, in that exercise?
SDO1: No, it was in Europe, the -- they struck a target in Europe ...”

It is beyond doubt that the U.S. stages such exercises on a regular basis. The difference with this one was the presence of the U.S. Secretary of Defense on site. Another major difference was the decision to broadcast news of the event to the world.

In this ‘game’ Russia stages a nuclear attack on some U.S. target in Europe. There are many such targets as the U.S. maintains a significant ‘bootprint’ in Europe, including a nuclear dimension. The ‘reasons’ for such an attack are not explained, although the U.S. has been consistent in characterising Russia as a major threat. In response, the U.S. stages a ‘limited’ nuclear response against the ‘aggressor’.

The ‘war game’ was advertised to the world in the weeks following the U.S. announcing that low-yield nuclear warheads had been deployed. It came weeks before the commencement of the ‘Defender 2020’ NATO exercise on Russia’s European flank. The announcement was made shortly before the convening of the 2020 Munich Security Conference, at which both Secretary of State Pompeo and Defense Secretary Esper aimed to quell concerns about the lack of U.S. commitment to ‘defending Europe’.

This ‘war game’ is an example of the extremely ‘dangerous game’ of nuclear threats and posturing conducted by the U.S. where Europe is a potential nuclear battleground. The European peace movements should clearly declare: Europe is not a U.S. nuclear playground, Make Europe Nuclear Weapon Free.
These efforts culminated in a September 2019 gathering in Brussels and the issuing of a ‘European Call for Nuclear Disarmament’ [see END Info 8]. It seems very clear that the spirit of this ‘Call’ and the need for Europe-wide action are as pressing as ever. The final point of the ‘Call’ is as follows: “We call upon all social movements to support a European campaign to halt the nuclear arms race and to work for nuclear and conventional disarmament. There can be no progress without major organised actions from citizens.” If this was true in September 2019, it is just as true in March 2020 when we are not only threatened with a new arms race and increased U.S. aggression but where plans to greatly increase the militarisation of Europe are underway, where France and Germany can discuss co-command of nuclear weapons, where the U.S. has deployed ‘low-yield’ warheads and where an enormous NATO exercise, ‘Defender 2020’, is taking place on the ground in Europe.

The European peace movements should gather again in 2020 to discuss the latest developments and to plan concrete actions. Why not make another push towards coordinated protests at European bases where the U.S. stores nuclear weapons? Why not a march from Paris to Berlin in opposition to the threat of co-command of nuclear weapons? Why not demonstrations across European capitals demanding a nuclear-free Europe? Of course, any such initiatives require monumental effort and courageous organising. They involve great expense in terms of finances, time and patience. But we face a dangerous coming together of factors that amount to an enormous nuclear risk. Now is the time to act.

The peace movement has friends in politics and we should aim to work constructively with national and European politicians to move our discussions and organisations forward. Political parties from the radical left, social democrats and greens are sympathetic to our cause. Many liberals and other, ‘less obvious’, potential allies will share our concerns. Let’s work with them to build a Europe-wide movement.

First-things-first: let us continue our discussions, let us meet again as movements and organisations for peace, let us urgently address what we must do and what we can do to meet the threats that present themselves. Let us build a movement for European Nuclear Disarmament.
This quote, from the *Munich Security Report 2020*, is an almost perfect example of the confusion and concern ripening at the centre of global power. 2019’s conference witnessed a significant divergence of opinion between Angela Merkel and U.S. Vice President Mike Pence on a number of issues, not least NATO spending commitments. Renewed divergences were anticipated by the conference organisers in their report, which troubled itself with the alleged phenomena of ‘Westlessness’.

“The contemporary ‘spiritual disunity of the West’ is due to the rise of an illiberal and nationalist camp within the Western world”, the report continues. Who is being referred to here? We are not left to guess, “Slogans like ‘make America great again’ or ‘take back control’ are misleading, as they suggest to recreate a past that never was and promise what cannot be achieved.”

If the peace movements have identified the ‘Trump-Johnson’ axis as a significant threat, so have those states that conceive of themselves as the upholders of the ‘liberal’ global order. The difference between us is that the peace movements have a rather sharper critique of the ‘old order’ than its defenders. Nevertheless, there are shared concerns of some importance. The transition from a unipolar to multipolar global order has drastically increased global risks and tensions. As *END Info* has argued more than once, we face a ‘global tinderbox’ of risks that could engulf us all.

The 2020 conference was prefaced by the antics of French President Emmanuel Macron, who seems to be on geopolitical manoeuvres. Özlem Demirel MEP deals with these issues in the adjacent article. However, it is worth re-stating the fact that Macron’s vision for a fully militarised, nuclear armed European Union will not only be vigorously opposed by the peace movement, but will only contribute further to the already existing processes of destabilisation.

In his rejoinder to Macron and the worrying over “Westlessness”, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo assured those gathered in Munich that, in actual fact, “the death of the transatlantic alliance is grossly over-exaggerated.” He went on: “The United States has ... with our Allies - undertaken the most significant reinforcement of NATO’s eastern flank since the Cold War.”

Whatever the fissures in the “transatlantic alliance”, there is in actual fact a great deal of unity in identifying Russia and China as primary threats. U.S. Secretary of Defense Mark Esper devoted his speech to assailing China and describing the measures underway to contain the ‘threat’. It seems likely that some great degree of unity on these questions will grow into firm commitments.

Although inconclusive, the outpourings from the Munich Security Conference are worth careful examination as we continue to raise the alarm and resist the threats posed by the reordering of global power.

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**Bizarre Nuclear Debate**

*Press release Özlem Alev Demirel MEP (DIE LINKE,) Strasbourg/Ankara, 13 February 2020*

This year’s Munich ‘Security Conference’ (SiKo) is to continue the current debate on the possible ‘Europeanisation’ of French nuclear weapons, despite a clear rejection of nuclear weapons by the population. German politicians have recently been following the ‘idea’ of ‘Europeanisation’ of French nuclear weapons. French President Emmanuel Macron strongly rejected this in a keynote speech last Friday. On the other hand, however, he offered to put French nuclear weapons at the service of European interests and even to involve EU allies in manoeuvres, as long as it was ensured that Paris retains full control of its arsenal.

These considerations are all aimed at a ‘nuclear Europe’. But even this does not go far enough for some. In some cases, Germany is even openly threatening to consider buying a German atomic bomb if France does not meet Germany’s desires for codecision rights. For decades, Germany has been trying to gain access to nuclear weapons by various detours. The stationing of US nuclear weapons in Germany as part of nuclear participation was obviously only a first step here.

It is now argued that new access to nuclear deployment decisions is needed because the US has become an unsafe cantonalist. Building a nuclear power Europe or even a nuclear power Germany would be a dangerous aberration. What is needed is the banning and abolition of all nuclear weapons worldwide, and the blockade on the Non-Proliferation Treaty must finally be abandoned. However, the Munich ‘Security Conference’ is not an event where demilitarisation will be discussed. Rather, it still serves to anchor military thinking in society. However, this is not possible, as the renewed protests against the ‘SiKo’ and the rejection of nuclear weapons by the majority of the population show. A ‘Europeanisation’ of nuclear weapons is not a contribution to security, but a madness of power politics!
In early February 2020 a German MP, Johann Wadephul of CDU party, ignited discussion of German co-command of French nuclear weapons, in exchange for German payments to France. Similar statements had been heard in earlier years. Wadephul in his interview admitted that the French reaction on any wishes for nuclear co-command is “no”.

As in the U.S. and Britain, French nuclear forces and the connected industries constitute a heavy load on the national economy. This is partially softened by income from armament exports. For historic reasons, Germany has restrictive regulations for such exports. Companies are not allowed to deliver armaments to Non-NATO-countries engaged in warfighting. This forms an obstacle for large European supranational military projects like the Future Combat Air System (FCAS) as replacement for the aging “Eurofighter”. The French partners plan for large-scale exports outside Europe, while German regulations make it difficult or impossible to contribute German-made parts for such French exports. So the French armament corporations are looking for the same freedom of trade as their French counterparts enjoy, and there is lobbying for relief or removal of the armament export restrictions. Discussions about a French “nuclear umbrella” extended to other NATO states and intensifying common armament exports are connected in this mainly economic frame. For the majority of the German public a co-command on whoever’s nuclear weapons would not be a cause of national pride but a complicity in horrible crimes against humanity.

Different from most other states, the German constitution contains an explicit obligation for each citizen to obey international law. No situation is imaginable in which a detonation of even the smallest yield nuclear weapon would not violate international law. Therefore the majority of UN member states see any use of a nuclear weapon as a war crime. German citizens participating in the use of a nuclear weapon will have to expect prosecution – if not by a German court then by the International Criminal Court in the Hague.

With availability of precision-conventionally armed missiles and the growing international resistance against nuclear weapons, the military role for such weapons has shrunk to just one: Destruction of deep underground command shelters, the only military action not yet feasible by conventional precision bombing. This is illustrated by the recent arming of some U.S. submarine-launched nuclear missiles with warheads in the 10-kiloton-class – like the Hiroshima bomb of 1945 – instead of more than hundred kilotons. The incorrect official claim is that these warheads would be “low yield”, usable with tolerable collateral damage. In fact the radius of total destruction of a 10 kiloton nuclear ground detonation in soft soil typical for Germany is about 2 kilometers and for typical German wind conditions the radioactive fallout cloud is deadly to unprotected persons for about 50 kilometers in wind direction.

In a historic conflict against U.S. dominance in Europe after WWII, in 1962 the French president Charles de Gaulle declared: “We don’t care for NATO’s battle in Germany”. He initiated the French nuclear deterrent “force de frappe”. In 1966 de Gaulle closed down all U.S. military installations which had remained in France after WWII and left the military integration of NATO. The purpose appeared clear: To keep the country out of the conflict between the Soviet Union and the U.S., the latter with a massive military presence in neighboring West Germany. There is no hint that the present French president Emmanuel Macron is on a path essentially different from de Gaulle’s. The wind direction in continental Europe is mostly towards east, so radioactive fallout from nuclear detonations happening in Germany in most cases will not harm France.

After Brexit, Britain still remains in NATO. The role of the British nuclear weapons – four Trident submarines – is nationally directed too. As Commander Robert Green, Royal Navy (ret’d), points out in his book Security without Nuclear Deterrence, the British Tridents are leased from the U.S. Navy, and the software includes U.S. components. So no British PM will know if these missiles technically ever could be fired without permission by the U.S.

In 1990 the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev agreed on German unification, the retreat of Soviet occupation troops and the membership of Germany in NATO. The open question remains, why didn’t he demand the withdrawal of all WWII victorious powers from German soil: “We go if You go. We stay if You stay”. So three decades later there are still U.S. nuclear weapons in Germany, at Buechel airbase. For a long time, a majority of the German public has wanted these weapons removed. In 2010 the German parliament made a resolution – all parties unanimously, which never happened before and afterwards: The German government was ordered to organize for U.S. nuclear bombs to be removed from the country. However, the government ignored this order, without any political consequences. The government doesn’t have to consider any citizens’ referendum because this is not permitted by the German constitution. The limited public satisfaction with German politicians is echoed by the – since 2017 – unprecedented large number of six political parties in the federal parliament.

Germany today is in the range of Russian, U.S., British, French and – hardly known – Israeli nuclear missiles. The threat of a land war in Europe appears to increase between
the U.S. and the militarily more than ten times weaker Russia, with expected reluctant or neutral roles for Britain and France.

No official polls are known, but from personal observation the logical fact is confirmed that virtually nobody in Germany would agree to the use of nuclear weapons against targets on German soil, regardless if by an enemy or by an ally, for whatever reasons given by the government.

Hardly anyone who grew up in West Germany knows that during the “Cold War” not only Soviet nuclear weapons threatened this country. The U.S. kept in store about 5000 nuclear warheads for area bombing of Soviet tanks invading West Germany, plus French (“Pluton”) and British (“Lance”) short range nuclear missiles deployed there too. The West German government kept these facts secret from its citizens, perhaps enforced by the military occupation situation. But since 1990 the German government could demand an assurance from NATO partners never again to target nuclear weapons on Germany, whatever the military conditions may be. One could question the value of such an assurance, but such a German demand is unheard of.

In Germany, particularly in former East Germany, U.S. military actions against Russia are seen as unnecessary provocations, as Russia kept its promises of 1990 and is not hostile against Germany. NATO eastern expansion and permanent NATO troop deployments in former Warsaw Pact areas under the flag of “personnel rotation” in contrast are seen as breaches of Western assurances towards Russia. The main media are reporting on events in Ukraine, but there are also the reports on the discrimination by the Ukrainian government against its Russian-rooted citizens, in a similar manner as is observed in Estonia and Latvia, EU and NATO member states being bound to human rights principles. In April and May 2020 the U.S. military will perform a military exercise “Defender 2020”; the biggest one in Europe for 25 years. Troops and heavy equipment from the U.S. shall land in German harbors and airports and move towards the Russian border.

If it comes to a European land war, Germany would be the main U.S. logistics center, because of its North Sea harbors. Baltic and Black Sea harbors are no suitable replacement due to their narrow and easily blockable entries at Oeresund and Bosphorus.

And Germany would be the main battlefield, because of the concentrated U.S. military infrastructure. However, in Germany there is little public awareness today about the danger of war, emanating from the U.S. activities and the U.S. bases in the country. These bases probably constitute priority targets for Russian nuclear missiles, deployed since 2018 in the Kaliningrad (former Eastern Prussia) enclave, 1000 kilometers from the U.S. bases. Until cancellation of the 1987 INF Treaty by U.S. president Donald Trump in 2019, the range of such missiles was limited to 500 kilometers – just reaching Berlin where there are no military targets.

But now Russia is free again to manufacture and deploy such land-based missiles of any range. Unfortunately, among the targets in Germany there are U.S. underground command shelters which can only be destroyed by nuclear precision hits. In case of such a Russian hit salvo and an immediate phone call by the Russian president informing the U.S. president about a “most regrettable mistake”: Will the U.S. president order a nuclear revenge strike against Russia which in such a situation may be in high alert to launch missiles against the U.S. mainland? Due to the main wind direction in Central Europe the radioactive fallout probably would not touch France or Britain. Due to the long-term consequences for the German social and medical system this country would be out of economic competition with the industrial states for decades.

But history is not predictable. In 2019 Emmanuel Macron surprisingly called NATO “braindead”. So it might be that a peaceful Europe-centered OSCE arrangement including Russia and the U.S. will happen without nuclear weapons and foreign troops, even though three decades delayed after the turning point of 1990.


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Nuclear Reaction

Only a concerted international effort will prevent a new nuclear arms race in the Middle East, argues Glen Rangwala

A few years from now, it's likely that the US assassination of Iranian Major General Qasem Soleimani at Baghdad International Airport on 3rd January 2020 will be remembered as the moment at which the nuclear arms race began in earnest in the Middle East.

Up to that point, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), negotiated painstakingly over a nine-year period up to its agreement in 2015 by the US, Russia, China, the UK, France and Germany with Iran, still held out the prospect for restraint. Even though the Trump administration withdrew from the JCPOA in 2018 and began an uncompromising attempt to punish any country or company that traded with Iran, the deal still held force. The International Atomic Energy Agency was still verifying that Iran was abiding by the main terms of the deal in May 2019. Iran’s response to the US withdrawal was to stage incremental, and notified, breaches of the agreement’s stockpile limits in order to signal its ability to take countermeasures while also remaining within the overall framework of the agreement.

The Iranian government’s cautiousness in responding to the US withdrawal was partly down to the hope that Trump would be out of office by 2021, and a more responsible US President would come back into compliance with the JCPOA. It was also part of an effort to win international support. The reasoning went that US hostility towards Iran could be contained if European and East Asian states continued to develop warmer relations with Iran and that the damaging effects of US secondary sanctions would be limited and the bellicose expressions towards Iran were more for Twitter than constituting actual policies.

This all changed on 3rd January, not just in the US killing of an iconic figure within Iran’s ruling elite but in the highly muted criticism made by those governments which still positioned themselves as Iran’s partners in the JCPOA. It left no ambiguity over the willingness of the US to engage in military strikes against Iran and Iranian officials, even when they are official guests in other countries. The idea that Iran’s key security interests could be protected through diplomacy and compromise has never looked so implausible.

Two days after the assassination, the Iranian government submitted without fanfare its notice that it would no longer abide by any of the limitations of the JCPOA. The chances are that this was not just an exercise in negotiations and signalling. There is of course a wider lesson that Iranian leaders have learned. Iraq and Libya used to have nuclear weapons programmes; both renounced them under international pressure, and then in both cases, the US began military campaigns to topple the government, leading to the 2003 invasion in Iraq and the 2011 aerial campaign to oust Muammar Gaddafi in Libya. North Korea notably is not making the same mistake. It is not just the hardliners in Tehran who argue that the only way to prevent US military action against their country escalating is to develop the ultimate deterrent.

But, as with all nuclear proliferation, there are regional consequences. Israel currently has the Middle East’s only nuclear arsenal. Saudi Arabia has repeatedly collaborated with Pakistan’s nuclear weapons programme, with the Saudi defence ministry not denying reports in 2015 that they had an agreement to purchase nuclear weapons from Pakistan on demand. Algeria, Egypt and Turkey are all likely to embark on concerted nuclear weapons programmes in the context of wider proliferation. Within a decade, the prospect of at least six countries in the most fraught region of the world pointing nuclear warheads at each other is far from unlikely.

The only way to halt this descent in a nuclear arms race would be to have clear incentives given to Iran to stay within the JCPOA. In January 2019, the European states created a vehicle for trading with Iran – INSTEX – as a way to bypass US secondary sanctions. Its effects so far have been minimal. Trade between the EU and Iran fell by 75% over the course of 2019, compounding the multiple economic problems Iranians are experiencing. But rather than looking to enable INSTEX to work, France, Britain and Germany on 14th January triggered the dispute resolution mechanism within the JCPOA, which will almost certainly lead to finding Iran non-compliant and the final collapse of the whole deal. The three countries put out a statement that their actions were designed to save the JCPOA; Boris Johnson on the same day said in a BBC interview that he wanted to ‘replace the JCPOA and get the Trump deal instead’, directly contradicting what the joint statement said. The world tumbles closer to nuclear war, and the prime minister can only put his faith in a non-existent deal by Donald Trump to avert it.

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A Peace Movement for the Mediterranean and the Middle East?

Paper submitted to a three day seminar of TRANSFORM EUROPE, Vienna, Feb 21 to 23, 2020 by Panos Trigazis (SYRIZA)

Background

For more than a century now, the peace struggles have been identified with the labour movement and the Left and I would say they have been inscribed in its DNA. The anti-fascist victory at the conclusion of World War II, was unfortunately followed by the Cold War, with the visible threat of a nuclear holocaust. This danger led to the globalization of the anti-nuclear movement, which had unprecedented growth in Europe, acquiring such breadth and strength that it was described as “People’s Diplomacy”.

Its Europe-wide dimension was noteworthy, as it organized marches across the borders, from Helsinki to Athens and from Copenhagen to Paris. Its forms of action were characterized by originality and ingenuity, primarily because of youth participation. To a large extent, that movement was spontaneous and consequently non-aligned. At the same time many of its leading members came from the youth, a phenomenon also witnessed in the American movement against the “dirty war” in Vietnam.

The post-cold war and post-bipolar era brought significant new conflicts to the fore, as a result of which, the significance of the struggle for peace and disarmament did not diminish, but rather, from many aspects, it increased.

The significance of the struggle for peace with justice also increased in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, as this region remained the primary theatre of wars, foreign interventions and intense militarization. The Gulf War in 1991 was accompanied by the then US President’s proclamation of the so-called “new world order”, under the US hegemony. During the same period, wars were also being waged in the Balkans, as a result of the violent breakup of the Yugoslav Federation.

Since the early 21st century, the international peace movement has grown in direct affiliation with the World Social Forum and the European one, in opposition to neoliberal globalization. In other words, promoting opposition to wars and armaments was sought, with social gains and social rights for the working people, as well as environmental protection. In addition, the so-called war against terrorism, which was proclaimed by President George W. Bush after the terrorist attack against the USA by Al-Qaeda on 11 September 2001, demonstrated vividly the close relationship between peace and human rights.

The threat of war in Iraq in 2003, on the pretext of the nuclear weapons possession by the Saddam Hussein dictatorial regime, touched off the largest and broadest anti-war mobilization since the cold war, for which mass mobilizations were organized on the same day in more than 70 countries.

War was not averted in Iraq, but the governments of Bush and Blair that carried out the invasion, emerged from this war politically and morally defeated. This hindered the plans for war on Iran which, in 2005 and 2006, looked very possible. At the same time, the anti-war movement became stronger in the USA and in the 2008 presidential elections contributed to the victory of the Afro-American Barack Obama, whose program included the military withdrawal from Iraq and Afghanistan.

I’d like to point out here that, among the most significant components of the post-Cold War peace movement were the international mobilisations of solidarity with the people of Palestine, who suffered repeated raids, particularly in Gaza.

From the above, there is no doubt that, the growth of a broad peace movement for the Mediterranean and Middle East does not concern this region alone, but all of Europe and, the whole world. This is also true today, when war is raging in Libya, and Yemen, while Syria continues to bleed additionally following Ankara’s invasion of the Kurdish populated northern part, the Cyprus issue has reached an impasse after the hopeful conference at Crans Montana in 2017.

Above all, the key issue for peace in the Middle East which is Palestine, is far from being solved, especially after the recent so-called peace plan announced by President Trump. In relation to this major issue, I’d also like to point out that the foundation for a two-state solution is being eroded by the recognition of the USA and other countries of Israel’s transfer of its capital from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, as well as its continued settlements in the occupied territories. In addition, a direct threat of war was recently created against Iran, after the murder of Iranian General Soleimani on Iraqi soil, but for the time being this threat has been averted.

Peace and Democracy

During the 20th century, the struggles for peace and disarmament have been linked with the vision of a democratic and socially just society. Therefore, the anti-fascist victory of the peoples in World War II was celebrated both as a victory of peace and democracy. Subsequently, the global opposition to cold war and the nuclear threat required the defense and deepening of democracy as well as the consistent opposition to militarism.

It is not by chance that the civil society movements, including the peace and disarmament one, have flourished in conditions of democracy. Consequently, the struggle for international détente contributed to promoting and achieving democracy. This happened...
in Europe in the early ‘70s with the end of three fascist dictatorships in Portugal, Spain and Greece. And the climax came with the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa, following the release from prison of Nelson Mandela in 1990. This historic development meant also the dismantling of the nuclear program of the apartheid regime and a new democratic constitution for South Africa, which recognizes 11 languages as official languages of that country.

We should not underestimate certain recent peace victories such as the multilateral agreement of 2015 regarding Iran’s nuclear program, and the Prespes Agreement between Greece and North Macedonia, a major step for peace in the Balkan region. I’d also like to add the democratic victory of the people of Sudan, after thirty years of a devastating military dictatorship, a victory that makes possible the democratic and just settlement of the decades old Darfur conflict.

As the modern anti-war movement cannot fail to be anti-nuclear, I regard also a major victory the conclusion and signing in 2017 of the convention for the abolition of nuclear weapons, following a UN conference which became possible because of international mobilisation, especially by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

Movement of the Movements

Allow me now to proceed by putting forward some ideas about the goals of a new peace movement for the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

1. Obviously, this movement must be anti-war, i.e. it must be uncompromisingly against dealing with international problems through war and violence, as required by the UN Charter and the post colonial victories of the peoples. Therefore, the contemporary peace movement fights to end to the wars in Libya, Syria and Yemen, always within the framework of the UN and its principles. Despite its initial poor results in Berlin, we have to support the Libya peace process.

2. As in the past, a new peace movement for the Mediterranean and Middle East must demand the region’s denuclearization, above all and in particular the transformation of the Middle East into a zone free of nuclear and other mass destruction weapons, which requires that Israel renounces its nuclear arsenal and other regional powers abandon their nuclear aspirations.

3. When we say peace, we do not mean only the absence of war. Consequently, a new peace movement must promote and demand the positive and multidimensional concept of peace which is associated inextricably with democracy, human rights and environmental protection.

4. Especially today, focusing on the ecological dimension of the anti-war and peace movement, means that many other pressing issues can be related with it, e.g., the refugee-migrant one, in particular the climate crisis has led to the emergence of big popular movements, mainly of young people, with Greta Thunberg a 15year old girl as a major symbol. From that movement, an important demand has been articulated in the form of “Change the System, Not the Climate”.

Therefore, it is urgent that an all Mediterranean campaign is launched under the slogan “Save the Mediterranean” in correspondence to “Save the Planet”. A campaign which would put forward demands to the European Union which as of 1995 decided to promote Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation, which so far has not succeeded to bridging the North-South gap in the region.

In addition, we have the Mediterranean Action Plan, a UN instrument for the protection of the Mediterranean environment. Therefore, one of our demands should be to implement and reinforce this project.

5. The multi-dimensional approach of the peace movement must also focus on the crucial issue of controlling and reducing military spending and arms exports in the Middle East and the Mediterranean, an area very highly militarized.

In conclusion, I would say that today we need urgently a broad, multiform and multi-thematic peace movement, affiliated with all social movements. In other words, the 21st century peace movement must be a Movement of the Movements.

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