

Shut down NATO

Call for participation in a nonviolent action against NATO on 4 April 2009

On 3 and 4 April the heads of state and government of NATO will meet in Baden-Baden and Strasbourg to celebrate NATO's 60th birthday. We think: 60 years of NATO are not a reason to celebrate, but a reason to resist nonviolently!



Since its foundation in 1949 NATO pretended to defend the so-called free West against the allegedly aggressive communism. Would this have been the real reason for NATO's existence, NATO would have had to dissolve following the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991. But this did not happen. Already during the Cold War NATO contributed significantly to the arms race between East and West, and participated with its secret operation Gladio in the repression against left movement in the West and the military coups in Greece in 1967 and Turkey in 1980. After 1990 NATO quickly developed itself from an alleged defence alliance into an intervention alliance for the military enforcement of Western interests.

Today, NATO stands for:

- **world-wide military interventions**, at the moment for example in Kosovo and Afghanistan, with an operation in the Mediterranean Sea and a training mission in Iraq, which trains police and military in Iraq. With the latter three military operations NATO actively participates in the so-called „war on terror“, which ultimately means the enforcement of Western hegemony and resource interests;
- the **illegal stationing of nuclear weapons** in Europe and the insistence on the illegal and inhuman nuclear first strike option;
- the **disengagement from international law**, for example through the bombardment of Yugoslavia contrary to international law in 1999, and generally the option to go to war without a mandate by the UN (self-authorisation of NATO);
- **structural violence**: the expenses for armament of all NATO members amount to more than 70% of global military expenditure. This money is not available to solve social or environmental problems world-wide.

In short: for us, NATO stands for the maintenance of the global status quo, the military protection and enforcement of Western economic, resources and hegemony interests and as a consequence the exploitation of the countries of the South. NATO in fact turns into the military arm of the G7 states (G8 minus Russia), especially during the present financial and economic crisis this military arm can quickly become even more important.

The 2009 NATO summit: Agreements to fight wars and to violate international law

At the NATO summit the heads of state and government of the NATO member states will discuss the continuation and development of these policies, and will make corresponding decisions. This is in fact an agreement to violate international law and to carry out wars of aggression. We will react to this with our nonviolent resistance.

The action: Shut down NATO

Nonviolent action against the NATO summit

On 4 April, a range of groups will express their protest against NATO and will attempt to obstruct the NATO

summit in Strasbourg. We understand ourselves as part of the international protest movement 'No to war -No to NATO' and we will participate in these protest with our own significant nonviolent action.

We want to show that NATO goes over corpses, and that we will confront this policy. With our action, we want to remember the past and future victims of NATO's wars and of military armament, and want to express very clearly, which interests are being pursued with NATO's strategies. The action will be provocative, but strictly nonviolent, even when our opponent attempts to clear us out of the way with violence. In the case of legal charges, we will put forward our legal view also in court and in doing so will enrich the public debate. According to our legal view, civil disobedience in most cases cannot only be justified morally/ethically, but also legally.

The undersigned call on everyone to participate in the nonviolent actions in Baden-Baden and Strasbourg.

Signatories:

Werkstatt für Gewaltfreie Aktion/Baden, Friedenskreis Halle, Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft – Vereinigte Kriegsdienstgegner/innen, Bund für Soziale Verteidigung, War Resisters' International, Vredesactie - Bombspotting, Union Pacifiste, OFOG, Alternativa antimilitarista - MOC

Information regarding the organisation of the action

Very important: we ask all participants to arrive early, on 1 April 2009. There will be an action camp, where will offer nonviolence training, so that we can prepare ourselves well for the action. It would be even better if you could form groups in advance and can participate in a training in advance, and form affinity groups. All necessary information for the preparation of the action will be available in the coming weeks on our web page <http://wri-irg.org>. It is also important to be aware that the law and jurisprudence in France regarding civil disobedience might be different from your own country (More information in the near future at <http://wri-irg.org>). Inform yourself and come to Strasbourg!

Contact:

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Legal stuff:

French law is different from the law in other countries. We are presently investigating the potential legal consequences of an action of civil disobedience. What is clear at present is that a blockade is an unauthorised assembly, and can be dissolved by the police.

