



## 60 years of NATO are enough!

### Confronting the war alliance with mass protests



In spite of all predictions of its imminent dissolution, in recent years NATO has developed a frightening war dynamic. On all levels, the alliance is preparing itself for future wars.

From a nuclear first strike strategy, the escalation of counter-insurgency operations in Afghanistan and the intensification of NATO-EU cooperation, through to a institutional renewal: there are more than enough reasons to confront the 60th jubilee of the war alliance, due to be celebrated on 3 and 4 April 2009 in Kehl and Strasbourg, with mass protests.

#### Nuclear first strike strategy and missile defence shield

In a position paper by five high-level NATO strategists, published in early 2008 ("Towards a new Grand Strategy for an Uncertain World"), the nuclear first strike strategy is being promoted openly. "The first use of nuclear weapons must remain in the quiver of escalation as the ultimate instrument to prevent the use of weapons of mass destruction". Such nuclear first strikes should also and especially be possible against states which themselves don't possess nuclear weapons – such as Iran.

Because of the nuclear sword a matching shield is to be developed, it was decided at the NATO summit in Bucharest in April 2007 to intensify the planning for a comprehensive NATO missile defence shield. This shield should be created in addition to the already planned US installations in Poland and the Czech Republic. The decision is based on a

secret feasibility study which NATO contracted out to several armaments companies. According to the estimates of these arms companies, it will cost, in total, 20 billion Euros. The German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), which advises the German government, estimates the costs of this destabilising project to be twice as high.

#### Afghanistan: prototype for civil military counter-insurgency operations

The NATO military operation in Afghanistan set into motion a cruel escalation. Since NATO's ISAF troops act more and more in an offensive manner, the armed skirmishes and deaths among the civilian Afghan population increase dramatically.

Under the military occupation, the structures of a liberal market economy have been created, which completely fail to reduce blatant poverty in Afghanistan. According to the UN Development Programme (UNDP) the humanitarian situation has changed for the worse since the NATO operation began: 61% of the population are chronically undernourished, 68% do not have access to drinking water. Even when it comes to women's rights, improvements are minimal according to UNDP.

NATO's occupation of Afghanistan is the problem and not the solution for this oppressed country. Therefore immediate withdrawal from Afghanistan is badly needed. Instead, NATO wants to send more troops to the country. Also the German government has

decided to "put more robust measures at the centre", as Minister of Defence Franz-Josef Jung announced in March 2008.

Via the civil-military cooperation as it is practised in Afghanistan, even development aid is being integrated into the NATO war efforts. Caritas International criticised NATO in June 2008, saying that "the distribution of aid

money is not linked to the real need for aid, but oriented towards the need of counter-insurgency". At the NATO summit in Bucharest it was decided to implement an – also kept secret – "action plan", which will make civil-military counter-insurgency generally the focus of present and future NATO missions.

#### Brothers in spirit: intensification of NATO-EU cooperation

Shortly after he took office, the newly elected French president Nicolas Sarkozy started a real NATO charm offensive. He announced that France would fully re-integrate itself into NATO's military structures after being absent for more than 40 years.

Already both organisations co-operate closely, for example within the framework of the Berlin Plus agreement, which allows the EU to use NATO resources for its operations. But France, which until the end of 2008 has the EU Council presidency, will now intensify co-operation at all levels. For this, the Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) proposes a stronger interlinking of both organisations by creating a "civil-military planning and conduct capability within NATO", which would "co-ordinate the civilian and military capabilities of the EU and the military capabilities of NATO in one place [...] [U]nder the motto of 'Berlin Plus Reversed' NATO could be granted the opportunity to draw on the EU's civilian capacities."

#### Institutional renewal

Just in time for the 60th jubilee in 2009 NATO, want to agree, or at least set in motion, a new NATO Strategic Concept.

The position paper "Towards a New Grand Strategy", referred to earlier, proposes a wide range of measures, among them that a UN mandate should no longer be a prerequisite for future NATO wars. Another demand that stands out is that the alliance in the future "should abandon the consensus principle at all levels below the NATO Council, and introduce at the committee and working-group levels a majority voting rule". In addition, the authors

#### Editorial

From 17–21 September, European social movements will gather in Malmö for the European Social Forum (ESF) 2008. Likewise, many peace and anti-militarist activists will meet at the European Peace Action Forum, which is part of the ESF, and organised by many European peace groups, coordinated by the Swedish antimilitarist group ofog.

This will be an important opportunity to strengthen and coordinate our nonviolent resistance to global militarism. With the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan continuing, an escalation of the confrontation between Europe and Russia over the short war in Georgia, and new dangerous armaments projects by NATO, we as antimilitarists and pacifists face huge challenges: how do we end the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and bring our countries' troops home? How do we stop the increasing militarisation of the European Union, and the ever closer co-operation between the European Union and NATO? How do we stop the rapid transformation of NATO into a more and more aggressive and offensive intervention alliance, and make steps towards disbanding NATO? How do we confront the increasingly aggressive recruitment efforts of our militaries in schools, universities, and disadvantaged neighbourhoods?

The issues we as antimilitarists face are huge and global, easily crossing the borders within Europe, and beyond. We as antimilitarists lag behind in our European and international coordination, to become a truly European, or even global antimilitarist movement, which can confront the challenges of a globalised militarism. Let's meet at the EPA in Malmö so that we can make some steps to catch up and challenge globalised militarism.

Andreas Speck

#### The Broken Rifle

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#### The Broken Rifle is changing ...

This issue of *The Broken Rifle* will be the last one in its old format – and the last one printed and distributed with *Peace News*. From the next issue on, *The Broken Rifle* will only be produced as an e-newsletter, and will be available on our website as PDF file for download and printing.

If you want to receive *The Broken Rifle* in the future, please subscribe to the e-newsletter either by sending an email to [thebrokenrifle-subscribe@lists.wri-irg.org](mailto:thebrokenrifle-subscribe@lists.wri-irg.org), or on the page of the newsletter at <http://lists.wri-irg.org/sympa/info/thebrokenrifle>.

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Please help us by donating to War Resisters' International. See page 4 of this Broken Rifle or online at <http://wri-irg.org/en/donate-en.htm>.



**War tax resistance**  
Nonviolent action against paying for war

After the attacks of 11 September 2001, and the beginning of the war on terror, War Resisters' International began to practice tax resistance – the withholding of a proportion of the income tax of its staff. The logic is simple: a certain percentage of every state's budget is allocated to the military – the fighting of or preparation for war. As a consequence, tax resisters withhold this proportion from the tax they are supposed to pay to the state – an act of civil disobedience, as presently no state makes provisions for "conscientious objection to military taxation".

For example, Britain's defence budget has been £32.6 billion in the financial year 2007/08, and it is set to increase to £36.9 billion in 2010/11. Even according to the Ministry of Defence, "the UK is the second highest spender (in cash terms) on Defence in the world behind only the United States. At 2.5% (2006) of GDP, the Defence Spending of the UK is above the NATO European average". According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), World military expenditure is estimated to have been US\$1339 billion in 2007 – a real-terms increase of 6 per cent over 2006 and of 45 per cent since 1998. This corresponded to 2.5 per cent of world gross domestic product (GDP) and US\$202 for each person in the world. The USA's military spending accounted for 45 per cent of the world total in 2007, followed by the UK, China, France and Japan, with 4–5 per cent each. All these are more than enough reason to withhold the part of the tax which goes to financing this insane expenditure.

Tax resistance is not very visible – it happens a lot on paper: filling in tax forms, writing letters, etc/ However, it can get more 'exciting' when you get taken to court, or when the bailiff threatens to confiscate part of your property for failure to pay your tax. These confrontations with the authorities can provide some scope for action and publicity.

From 5-7 September 2008, tax resisters from all over the world will meet in Manchester for the 12th International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns. You can find out more at: <http://www.peacetax2008.org.uk/>. If you want to know more about WRI's struggle with the tax office, check out <http://wri-irg.org/wtr.htm>.

Andreas Speck



# Military bases: the footprint of war ...

## ... and target for nonviolent direct action

Europe is at war. The bombs are not falling in Europe, but several thousand kilometers away in Iraq and Afghanistan. Nevertheless war is waged from Europe. From a whole range of military bases in Europe planes take off and supplies are shipped or air lifted to fight those wars.

The Iraq war made this very visible, when the US waged war from its European bases together with British military forces. In 2003, 54,000 US military based in Europe were deployed, or were active in direct support of the war, against Iraq. There was 320,000 tons of military material shipped from Europe to the war zone in the Persian Gulf. The US Army had 26,000 European-based soldiers deployed, mainly from bases in Germany and Italy. Bombing flights over Iraq by the US and UK air forces were continually taking off from British bases like Fairford, while 3000 combat sorties were flown from the aircraft carriers of the US 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean. Marines were inserted into northern Iraq from Souda Bay marine base in Crete.

And this is still going on. In 2006, two-thirds of the US Army personnel in Europe were deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, preparing to deploy, or just returned; 75% of the military equipment used by the US military in these wars passes through Europe.

Meanwhile, through NATO, other European countries are also heavily engaged in the Afghanistan war. About 25,000 European military participate in the so-called International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), making up nearly 50% of this force. Through the EU these countries set up their own inter-



US transport planes at Fairford, Britain

ventions, like in Congo or Chad. During the last 10 years they have transformed their forces into intervention armies. They have developed the capacity to deploy their forces far from their own territory. Local military bases now house military units trained in military occupations elsewhere, and all European countries have individually or collectively developed their own infrastructure for long-distance deployment and command.

Both NATO and EU operations are led from military headquarters in Europe. The NATO operation in Afghanistan is led by the NATO operational headquarters in Brunssum (Netherlands). EU operations have been led from national headquarters: the EUFOR operation in Congo was led from the headquarter in Potsdam (Germany) while both the earlier Artemis operation in Congo and the recent in-

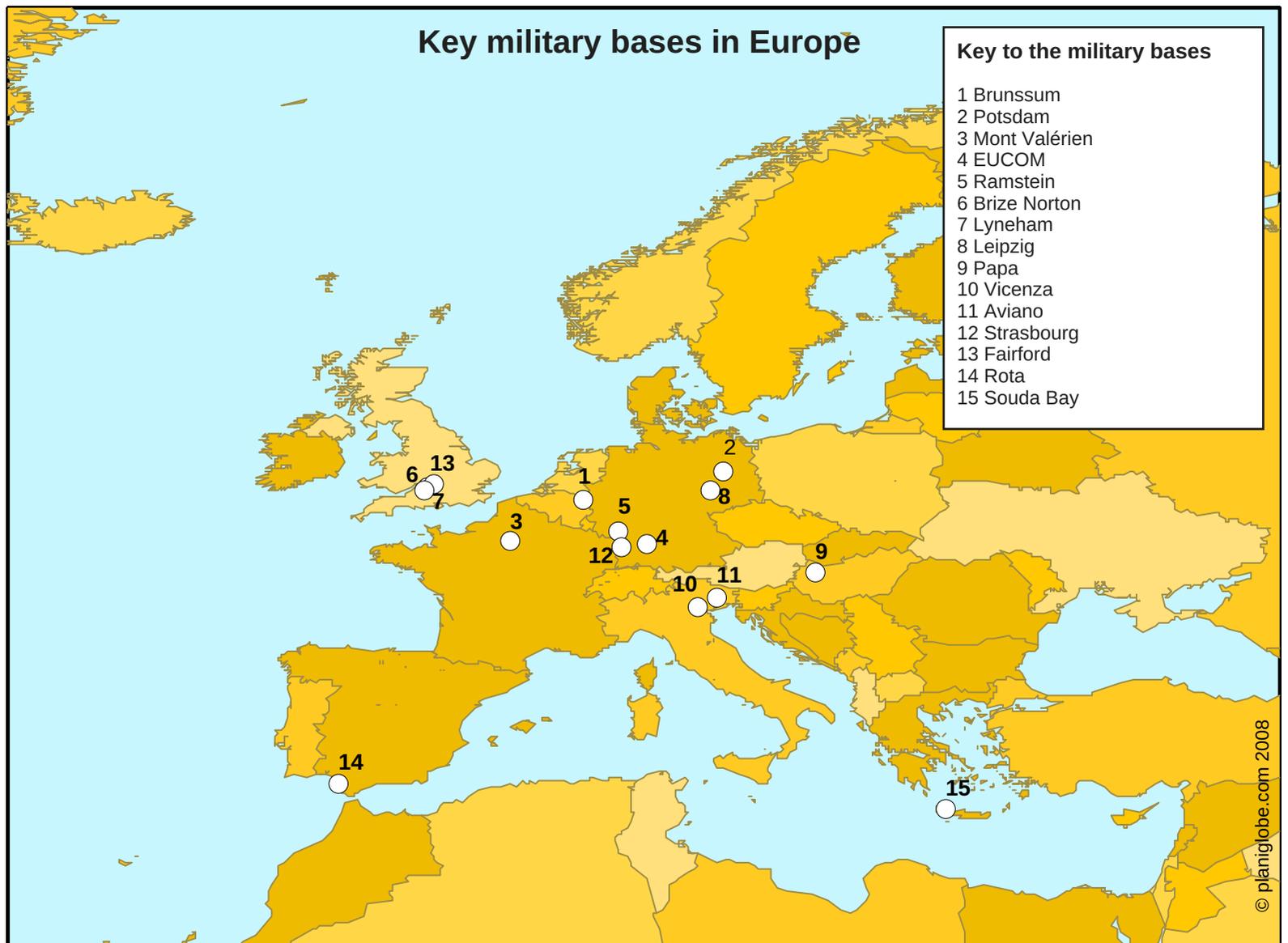
tervention in Chad were led from the French headquarters in Mont Valérien near Paris. And the US has its own military command in Europe: EUCOM in Stuttgart (Germany). While the US operations in Iraq and Afghanistan are run through another command, CENTCOM, EUCOM co-ordinates the supporting role and the deployments from the European US bases. Although all these headquarters look from outside just like ordinary office buildings, inside them fighting military forces are co-ordinated and sustained.

### Transport infrastructure

Very important for military intervention is the sea- and airlift infrastructure. Military bases function as hubs in a wide transport network in order to move troops and material into the combat zones.

An important example is the biggest air base in Europe: Ramstein (Germany). More than 10,000 US military personnel work on this base. Once an important fighter airbase, it is now a central hub for airlift towards Asia, Africa and the Middle East, for US and NATO forces. This base is operated by the US 86th Airlift Wing and also hosts both the EUCOM air component command as well as one of NATO's. More than 10,000 tons of cargo and about 25,000 passengers pass through Ramstein each month.

European countries operate their own airlift assets at a national level (UK: Brize Norton and Lyneham; Netherlands: Eindhoven; Belgium: Melsbroek; ...) but are also investing in pooled airlift. Through the SALIS project they lease for collective military use 6 Antonov An-124 transport planes, which are based at the



civil airport of Leipzig (Germany). Another project is the purchase of three C-17 aircraft, which will be based at the military airport of Papa (Hungary) from November 2008.

For sealift, civil capacities are often used. Most European countries have or no – or insufficient – means of military sea transport, so civil shipping is hired. Also, civil ports are used. The US Army uses the ports of Antwerp, Rotterdam and Bremen for its sea transports from and towards its bases in Germany.

**Combat forces**

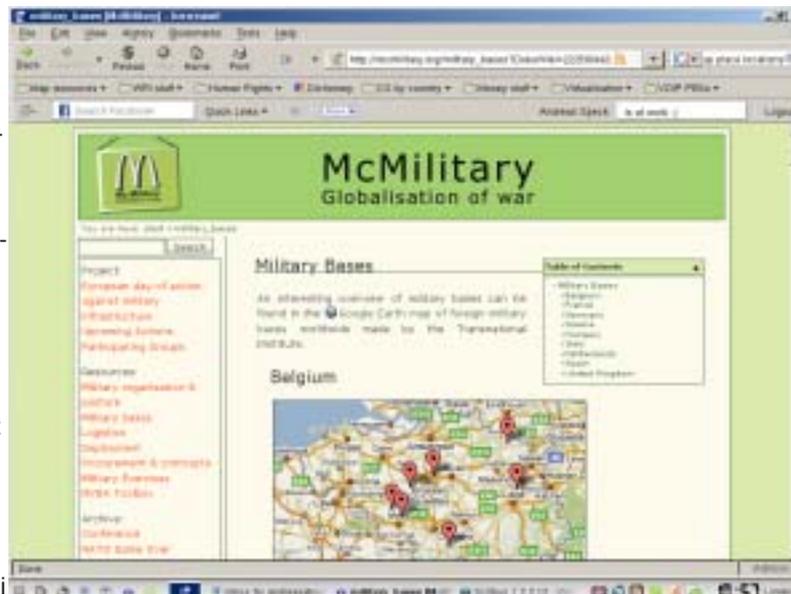
The next building block for military interventions are the combat forces, nowadays fewer and with lighter material in order to be more easily deployed to the battle zone. These are spread across a lot of bases all over Europe. NATO aims to have 40% of its land forces ready for deployment and 8% of them continuously in operation, which results in a lot of bases being involved. So we have to limit ourselves to some examples.

Vicenza in northern Italy houses the main part of the US 173rd Airborne Brigade in the Ederle barracks; 2900 military. There are plans to concentrate the whole brigade in Vicenza and to build a new base on the Dal Molin civilian airfield. This would raise the US military presence to 5000 soldiers. The 173rd AB is one of the three main US combat brigades destined to remain based in Europe. In 2003, 1000 soldiers from this brigade did a parachute jump into northern Iraq, taking off

from Aviano military airport (Italy). Later this brigade deployed to Afghanistan as well. The new base enlargement would make Vicenza one of the main military intervention bases in Europe, a prospect which provoked demonstrations of more than 100,000 people.

But this US base is not the only intervention force in Vicenza. It also houses the headquarters of the European Gendarmerie Force. This is a European intervention force consisting of militarised police and specialised in crisis management. It was started by France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. Operations will be led from this headquarters in Vicenza.

An example of European combat forces is the Eurocorps based in Strasbourg. This is a headquarters for land forces, originally formed by France and Germany and later joined by Bel-



The McMilitary.org website provides information on many military bases – and you can help to add more.

gium, Spain, Luxembourg and Poland. It permanently has about 1000 personnel, and national forces are earmarked for operations under this command. The Eurocorps can be used for EU and NATO operations, and it was used in Kosovo and Afghanistan.

One brigade is permanently earmarked for this headquarters: the French-German Brigade. This brigade is a major army unit with about 5000 soldiers coming from both countries. It is based at several places in the German region of Baden-Württemberg. This brigade was deployed together with the Eurocorps HQ to Kosovo and Afghanistan.

Not only land forces are involved in interventions. Fighter planes based in Europe are often deployed to Afghanistan to give close air support for the land troops, in other words bombing. And sometimes the bombing flights take off directly from European bases: during the last Iraq war from Fairford (Britain), in 1991 also from Rota (Spain), in the Kosovo war from Italian bases.

These are just a few examples of the footprint of war in Europe, as 1000 military bases are impossible to describe in 1000 words.

Hans Lammerant



NATO in Afghanistan, © Photo: NATO



**European Peace Action Forum at the European Social Forum Malmö 17-21 September 2008**

As part of the European Social Forum in Malmö, several antimilitarist and peace groups are organising the European Peace Action Forum.

The forum will focus on 4 themes: NATO and the militarisation of the EU, nuclear weapons, militarisation of space, and the international military industrial complex.

The over-reaching theme for the entire forum will be how to strengthen our resistance against militarisation. During the forum there will also be possibilities to do direct actions against arms companies in the region. The forum welcomes anybody who is interested in peace work, not only people who are already active but also those who don't have any previous experience at all in peace activism.

The EPA forum is an opportunity not just to meet each other, discuss the issues, network and co-ordinate but also a chance to take action together. It will provide information in advance on military related companies and organisations in the Malmö area. People are encouraged to come with an affinity group and a plan for their action. EPA will provide some basic support and facilities for sharing the story of your action.

EPA will also organise an action in Malmö, open to all. Those who wish to take action together but haven't come with an affinity group and a specific plan are welcome to join us in this.

More information at <http://www.europeanpeaceaction.org/node/1>

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propose that countries, which do not want to be part of a certain mission, would in future not have any right to take part in decisions – only those who take part in the combat should take part in decisions: "It has always been left to individual nations to contribute what capabilities or forces they can. But nations that do not contribute forces should also not have a say in the conduct of military operations. We therefore propose [...] that only those nations that contribute to a mission – that is, military forces in a military operation – should have the right to a say in the process of the operation."

How much of these and other demands will be part of a new Strategic Concept is at present unclear, but they will play an important role in the upcoming debate.

**60th NATO jubilee – call for protests in Strasbourg and Kehl**

NATO will – presumably – on 3 and 4 April 2009 in Strasbourg and Kehl celebrate its 60 years of existence. This is also an invitation to us, the peace and anti-war movement. NATO stands for the military enforcement of Western interests, and it is and more and more an alliance to fight wars. We should start a campaign to deligitimise NATO – it is superfluous and should be dissolved. A highlight of this campaign could be international actions against the 60 years of NATO summit in Strasbourg and Kehl.

Tobias Pflüger  
WRI Council member and member of the European Parliament

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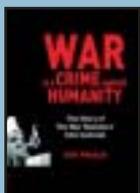


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Lock-on blockade at Faslane, the British nuclear submarine base. Photo: Simo Hellsten

## War Starts from Europe

### 14–15 November 2008: European day of action against military infrastructure

In the previous two articles we have looked at how Europe is part of the war machinery, by looking at the various infrastructures and military bodies used for military interventions. So as we are now clear how these interventions are implemented, we can start to do what we can to disrupt them! Groups all around Europe are campaigning against militarism, each group choosing their own way of acting depending on their own context and their own group principles and strategies. Within the groups involved in the call for the day of action, the common starting point is undertaking nonviolent direct action against militarism.

#### A European antimilitarist network

There are many experiences, through the years, of regional antimilitarist actions so this latest effort is nothing new, but it's an important effort in keeping alive the antimilitarist movement in Europe – re-energising it and expanding it, getting to new countries and movements.

The process of co-operating regionally has always been an aim of antimilitarists in Europe, but these more concrete plans started at the WRI 2006 Triennial Conference in Germany 2006, "Globalising Nonviolence", where some of the groups participated in a working group on nonviolent citizen interventions facilitated by Vredesactie (WRI's affiliate in Belgium). After the conference, Vredesactie held a meeting in Brussels, to continue the process of working together regionally – it was here where a more concrete plan was designed, with the idea of supporting each other's actions, creating a common space on the web for sharing resources on military infrastructure and the transport of weaponry and to share action strategies and reports from actions done by the different groups. The website [www.mcmilitary.org](http://www.mcmilitary.org) was created, a Wiki which makes it possible for different groups to post on it. Groups present were from Belgium, the UK, Sweden, Spain, the Netherlands and France.

#### Campaign examples

These are examples of campaigns carried out by the network

- **Faslane 365:** This was organised by Trident Ploughshares and others in Scotland, with the aim of blockading the base at Faslane, where UK's Trident submarines are based every day for one year. During the year of blockades, the campaign managed to bring activists from all over the UK and also from many other countries in Europe to do their own blockades. Each group had its own style, showing the diversity of the movement.
- **Bombspotting:** This Belgian campaign started as a local campaign of mass nonviolent action against nuclear weapons. In March 2008 the campaign organised the NATO Game Over action, a nonviolent action at the headquarters of NATO, involving around 300 internationals in a total of around 1000 people taking part. There were 500 arrests and 50 activists managed to climb over the fence of the NATO headquarters. This was an important occasion for the network

to come together in an active way.

- **Reclaim the base** (State of Spain): For a number of years the groups around Alternativa Antimilitarista MOC in the State of Spain have been active following the WRI initiative on reclaiming the bases. Every May in what they call Mayo Caliente (Hot May), they carry out nonviolent direct actions at military bases around the country, with a special focus on bases which are part of the NATO structure.
- **Disarm:** The Swedish antimilitarist group ofog organises a Disarm Camp during the summer in Sweden, during which they carry out nonviolent action against Swedish weapons manufacturers.

#### Call for a decentralised day of action

As result of NATO Game Over, there is a proposal for a joint decentralised day of action, focusing on the role that Europe plays in military interventions. The dates set for the action are 14–15 November 2008. Each group should choose their own target for their action – it can be a military base, the facilities of weapons manufacturers, defence institutions, etc. The character of the action should be decided by each group, the only requirement being that it has to be nonviolent. But we encourage groups to do actions that can directly disrupt the normal functioning of military-related activities.

There is a website at <http://europeanpeaceaction.org/> which will provide the space for groups to say what actions they are planning and for reports from the actions themselves. Also on this website you can read the call for the day of action. There is also a list-serve for discussing and sharing information about the actions – if you want to join the list, just contact the WRI office at [info@wri-irg.org](mailto:info@wri-irg.org)

If we want to stop militarism we need to act at a local and global scale – for this join the European day of action against military infrastructure!

For more information contact the WRI office.

Javier Garate

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