



22  
03  
08

Europe serves as a staging ground for military interventions worldwide. The framework can differ: NATO, EU, US coalition of the willing, UN. The target as well: Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, .... But the departure points not: military bases, airports and harbours in Europe.

Europe hosts a large military intervention machinery. The 5th anniversary of the war in Iraq is a good moment to again make the resistance against military globalisation visible. We do not need a machinery for global military intervention. We do not need military alliances that threaten the rest of the world. Enough! Security is too important to leave it to the military.

Economic globalisation also has its military correlary. New York Times' columnist Thomas Friedman said: "The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist. McDonald's cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the builder of the F-15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley 's techno-

logies is called the United States Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps." This fist is not solely a US phenomenon. Europe builds its own intervention capacity through the militarisation of European Union, with or without the US and NATO. In Africa EU humanitarian interventions support and legitimate the neo-colonial policies of the bigger European states or the former colonial powers. Within NATO energy security is now openly being discussed as a NATO task.

A broad and international movement challenges the legitimacy of the G8-leaders and blocked the G8-summit in Germany last year. It is time to also challenge the legitimacy of their military power tools. NATO is one of the most important institutions of this military globalisation, just like the G8 is for the economic globalisation. And just like we said no to the G8, we have to say no to NATO. Stop these war games! NATO—Game Over.

**NATO—Game Over**

Through NATO, Europe is involved in the wars in Iraq and

Afghanistan. European states train military forces for the NATO Response Force and partly due to NATO the US still maintains military bases in Europe used for military interventions worldwide. During the war in Iraq US soldiers deployed from their bases in Europe to the Persian Gulf. In Afghanistan NATO has taken the lead role in the military occupation and many European states have soldiers in Afghanistan. Last but not least, US, French and British nuclear weapons – with a role in the NATO strategy – are still deployed in Europe. And they are as illegal here as elsewhere.

Peace activists from all over Europe will join in Brussels, Belgium on 22 March 2008 for the first action of 'NATO—Game Over'. We will go to the NATO headquarters and close them. We will enter and inspect the NATO headquarters for evidence of war preparations and the deployment of nuclear weapons.

**Military globalisation and non-violent resistance in Europe**

Linked to the action Bombspot-

ting and War Resisters' International organise a seminar on military globalisation and nonviolent resistance in Europe. Five years ago the war in Iraq strengthened public awareness of Europe's role in the military globalisation. In 2003 all over Europe nonviolent direct actions took place against the deployment of US and UK troops to Iraq. Today, military bases are met with local resistance – from the Czech Republic, to Italy and Poland, to mention just a few. At this seminar we will bring together the local resistance against bases and non-violent direct action groups from several European countries to share knowledge on the military complex and to build partnerships and common strategies. We create a common awareness of the military intervention machinery (NATO, EU and other) and of the role of our local military base in it. We investigate how we together can be the sand in the machine: how can co-ordinated local and international actions raise our impact.

**Resist Military Globalisation!**

Five years after the Iraq war started: an international action weekend at NATO's headquarters in Brussels, Belgium.



**NATO**  
**GAME OVER**

22/03/08



Want to take part in this nonviolent action?  
More information under [www.bombspotting.org](http://www.bombspotting.org)



# NATO GAME OVER

## Counter military globalisation: NATO Game Over

NATO Game Over: on 22 March 2008, five years after the start of the Iraq war, activists from all over Europe will nonviolently try to enter and close NATO headquarters in Brussels, in order to prevent further war crimes and military occupations. The following two days, Bombspotting and War Resisters' International organise a conference on how to counter the ongoing military globalisation with nonviolent resistance.



Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Samuel Bendet, courtesy of U.S. Army

### Military globalisation and NATO

Europe is at war. The bombs are not falling in Europe, but several thousands of miles away in Iraq and Afghanistan. Nevertheless war is waged from Europe. With the start of the war in Iraq five years ago, when the US waged war from its European bases together with the British military forces, this became very visible. In 2003 54 000 US military personnel based in Europe were deployed or were active in direct support of the war against Iraq. 320 000 tons of military material was shipped from Europe to the war zone in the Persian Gulf. The US Army had 26 000 European-based soldiers deployed, mainly from Germany. Among them were 1 000 soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade, based in Vicenza (Italy), who did a parachute jump into Northern Iraq taking off from Aviano airport (Italy). Bombing flights over Iraq by the US and UK Air Force were continuously taking off from British bases, while 3 000 combat sorties were flown from aircraft carriers of the US 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean. Marines were inserted into North Iraq from Souda Bay on Crete. All this is still going on. In 2006 two thirds of the US Army personnel in Europe was deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, preparing to deploy or just returned. 75% of the military equipment used in these wars by the US military passes through Europe. And besides all the talk about secret rendition flights, the US military openly moves prisoners of war to Guantanamo through its European bases. In other words, the war in Iraq is not possible without wide European consent to these military operations. Meanwhile European countries par-

ticipate in the ongoing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our governments support NATO's International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, a force of 40 000 military under NATO command of which about 20 000 come from European countries. NATO has also developed its own intervention force, the NATO Response Force, consisting of 20 000 soldiers for rapid intervention. All this is the result of being part of NATO. NATO membership implies participation of your country in military interventions all over the world, directly with national forces or indirectly through military bases or as logistical support for foreign troops. The war in Iraq has been fought because Iraq was supposed to develop weapons of mass destruction, and Iran is threatened with war for the same reasons. Meanwhile, thanks to our NATO membership, about 350 US nuclear weapons are deployed in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Turkey and the UK. The British nuclear arsenal also has a NATO role. In terms of international humanitarian law these weapons are as illegal here as elsewhere. In the US strategy these nuclear weapons already have a role in wars in the Middle East and if they do not disappear they will get such a role as well in the NATO strategy. NATO is one of the most important institutions in this military globalisation, just like the G8 is for the economic globalisation. And just like we said no to the G8, we have

to say no to NATO. NATO Stop these war games, NATO Game Over.

### NATO discusses its future. What is at stake?

At the beginning of April a very decisive NATO summit will be held in Bucharest. NATO is discussing its future and undergoing a transformation of its military into intervention forces. A political transformation is also going on and the US would like to see NATO evolving into a global military alliance of like-minded states. A kind of 'United Nations of the Willing', which will result in the marginalisation of the real United Nations. In other words, an alternative for the United Nations without difficult competitors like Russia and China and spoilers like Iran and an alternative which can legitimate military intervention on its own without recourse to the UN Security Council. This would mean a further polarisation and militarisation of international relations. As a first step in this evolution the US would like to see closer relations between NATO and Pacific-states like Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South-Korea. In practice this is developing through their participation in the Afghanistan war and through several technical agreements between NATO and these states. Their participation in the political discussions and decision-making is much more contested as this would mean an important internal power shift. Also Europe would suddenly become entangled in the power

struggles in the Pacific. It can be heard regularly in American military circles that the next big conflict will be with China. Do we really want to get involved? How will the countries who do not belong to the group of the 'Willing' react? What will it be like to not be part of the 'right' camp? These countries will be confronted with a global military alliance that can brand them as a security problem. For them this is a threat to which they will strive to respond militarily. The result is a further arms race and militarisation of international relations. The idea that these threats are global could well become a self-fulfilling prophesy. An important step in the discussion on NATO's future will be the review of its Strategic Concept. This document states the basic strategy of NATO. A new document would shape NATO policy for the next ten years. The chance is quite high that the Bucharest summit will open the Strategic Concept for review. This could result in a new Strategic Concept on the 60th Anniversary Summit in April 2009. Therefore the coming year is very important for the future of NATO and for the antimilitarist an important time to put political pressure on NATO. Will NATO remove its nuclear weapons or do they get a new role towards the Middle East? Will NATO become a global military alliance? Will NATO legitimate the US missile defense system and incorporate it into a NATO system? With the NATO—Game Over-action just two weeks before the Bucharest-summit we hope to create some political pressure targeted at these decisions.

**NATO is one of the most important institutions in military globalisation, just like the G8 for economic globalisation.**





Photo: Legasse

**D**uring NATO—Game Over on 22 March 2008 activists from all over Europe will nonviolently try to enter and close the NATO headquarters in Brussels, in order to prevent further war crimes and military occupations. With this action we want to make NATO, one of the cornerstones of military globalisation, a target of an international movement just as the G8 is such a target. We want to give the message: NATO, stop these war games, NATO—Game Over. Even if we are not able to enter, we will give a clear message to NATO and our governments: many people from all over Europe want to see an end of NATO's war games.

### An international campaign

To make NATO a target of an international movement, we want the NATO Game Over-action to be as international as possible. We hope to have activists present from as many NATO member-countries as possible. And we promote that in every country the NATO Game Over-action is integrated into existing campaigns. All over Europe movements struggle against nuclear weapons, against military bases, for withdrawal from Afghanistan and Iraq, missile defense... We want to connect with all these struggles. We are looking for people to strengthen our press team in order to make possible that press releases and reports on the action go to the press in different countries in their own language with a message adapted to the local political discussions and fitting to the local campaigns. In this way we can strengthen each others' efforts across the borders and we build an international movement against military globalisation.

### Nonviolence

Our actions are strictly nonviolent. This means that we try to enter NATO HQ in a resolute manner but without the use of physical violence against people. We do not respond with violence, even when we are provoked or when violence is used against us. In this action there is no space for any violent act.

## NATO—Game over Nonviolent Direct Action

We can have a lot of theoretical discussions on nonviolence but it is also something very practical. On 20 and 21 March nonviolence action training specifically aimed at the NATO Game Over-action is provided, to make sure that all activists feel able to participate in a nonviolent way.

We do not expect everyone to be principled pacifists but ask all participants to respect the action guidelines.

Finally we try to get as broad support as possible for a change in NATO strategy. We want our action to be seen as something in which a lot of people can imagine themselves participating.

### Bombspotting

The NATO Game Over-action is organised by the Belgian Bombspotting-campaign and developed out of a 10-year long nonviolent direct action campaign against nuclear weapons. A Bombspotting-action is a mass action of civil disobedience by trespassing and inspecting military bases and headquarters. The first action was with 10 people, but since 2001 each time around 1000 people participate. This time we go to the NATO headquarters in Brussels, in the past we also had actions at the nuclear weapon base in Kleine Brogel and at SHAPE, NATO's military headquarters.

Such a war crime inspection by civilians has its legal justifications as it is meant to stop and prevent war crimes. Nuclear weapons can

not be used without violating humanitarian law, while their deployment constitutes the preparation of war crimes and is in itself a crime against peace. Since our legal systems fail to address these crimes, we have no other option than acting ourselves to stop them.

### Civil disobedience

A Bombspotting-action is an action in which we try to stop the preparation of war crimes.

Trespassing on a military base without permission is a crime according to Belgian criminal law, but we believe our action is legally justified because this action is necessary to stop the preparation of war crimes. Civil dis-

obedience becomes upholding international law.

### Legal consequences

The NATO Game Over-action is not risk-free. Trespassing on a military base without permission is a crime according to Belgian criminal law and is in theory punishable with a prison sentence of maximal 5 years. But Belgian criminal law also recognises the political character of this crime, which means that the prosecution has to take place before a jury. Up to now the prosecutor has not brought a case before a jury, probably out of fear that ordinary citizens would rather listen to common sense than to state reason and would take our justification into account. In the last 5 years no prosecution has been attempted for these actions. During the ten years of the Bomb-

spotting-campaign the Belgian courts have never sentenced anyone for these actions. In practice the only consequence of participating in a Bombspotting-action is an arrest for several hours. The theoretical maximum of such an arrest is 24 hours, but in practice the police starts releasing when it is clear that the action is over.

But be aware that this is only valid for trespassing actions. We try to avoid other criminal offences during the action in order to keep the legal consequences predictable for participants and to preserve the possibility to do such actions. This legal situation anyway leaves enough space to build a strong action against NATO.

Participating means in practice that you will be arrested and that your identity will become known to the authorities. A Bombspotting-action is no hit-and-run action. If you do not feel able or willing to participate in a very open action of civil disobedience, this is not the right action for you.

Although the legal situation makes it doubtful that any legal consequences will follow, we can not guarantee that. Everyone is responsible for his/her own deeds and has to be conscious about the possible consequences. We make sure you do not end up isolated in court, but in case of prosecution it is still you facing the courts. Be aware that in such improbable but not impossible case the action is not finished on 22 March but after a court procedure. NATO Game Over is an action of civil disobedience, not a demonstration approved by the authorities.

From 20 until 24 March basic accommodation is being organised, where you can stay with your own sleeping bag. Please let us know if you come through the inscription form on the website.

Information: [www.bombspotting.org](http://www.bombspotting.org)  
Contact: international [at] bombspotting.org



# Military globalisation and nonviolent resistance in Europe

**A two day international conference in Brussels, 23-24 March 2008**



**Please register for the conference through [www.bombspotting.org](http://www.bombspotting.org) or international [at] bombspotting.org**

One day of action is not enough to make a difference. We need more and long-term international co-operation to have an impact on military intervention policy in general. Following the NATO Game Over-action we reflect on military globalisation and how to improve nonviolent resistance in a 2-day conference (23-24 March 2008) in Brussels organised by Bombspotting and War Resisters' International.

Five years ago the Iraq war increased public awareness of Europe's role in military globalisation. In 2003 all over Europe nonviolent direct actions took place against the deployment of US and UK troops to Iraq. Meanwhile nuclear weapons and military bases are often met with strong resistance. But until now these campaigns mostly remained on the local or national level. While they often had some local or national impact, the political decisions are today taken on an international level. To have an impact on these decisions cooperation across the borders is needed.

At this conference we bring together the local resistance against military bases and nonviolent direct action groups from several European countries to share knowledge on the military complex and to build partnerships and common strategies. We share our knowledge on military bases, movements and military deployments to create a common understanding of the military intervention machinery and the role of our local military base in this structure. We investigate how together we can put a spanner into the works: how can coordinated local and international actions potentially raise our impact.

With both the NATO Game Over-action and the conference Bombspotting and War Resisters' International hope to strengthen the international resistance against military globalisation.

From 20 until 24 March basic accommodation is being organised, where you can stay with your own sleeping bag. Please register through the form on [www.bombspotting.org](http://www.bombspotting.org)!

As part of the preparation of the conference we aim to map military bases and activities on the website [mcmilitary.org](http://mcmilitary.org). On this wiki participating groups are invited to share their knowledge and collect sources on military activities. This will be used to have a closer look into the practice of military interventions (bases, transport routes, infrastructure used) and will remain available as a public resource after the conference.

If you want to contribute, send a message to [international@bombspotting.org](mailto:international@bombspotting.org)

**From 20 until 24 March basic accommodation is being organised, where you can stay with your own sleeping bag.**

# NATO GAME OVER



## Program

### Sunday 23 March

**9:30-12:30 The military landscape in Europe**  
All over Europe the military is transforming into intervention armies. This changes the role of institutions like NATO and EU and of military bases and infrastructure. In this workshop an overview is given on the military landscape in Europe.

Hans Lammerant (Bombspotting): NATO as framework for military interventions and the role of US bases in Europe.  
Tobias Pflüger (MEP - tbc): EU as framework for military intervention. The German military in its intervention role.  
Xavier Renou (author, activist of Les Désobéissants): French military interventions and the integration of French neocolonial policy into EU policy.

**13:30-16:30 War starts from Europe: how does it work**  
We do a mapping exercise of where the military bases are and what their role is. We will use the collected information on [mcmilitary.org](http://mcmilitary.org). We look into past and present mobilisations for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as an example of how military intervention works in practice.

Speakers: Andrea Licata (Vicenza), Hans Lammerant (Bombspotting), Wilbert van der Zeijden (No Bases / TNI)

**16:30-18:30 Research on military activities for actions and campaigns**  
The military institutions are not the most transparent. How do you find out what is happening? A presentation of research done by action groups for their actions and campaigns. Contributions by Nukewatch (transports of nuclear weapons), Bombspotting (military transports during Iraq war), Castor-campaign (nuclear waste transports), ...

**20:00-22:00 parallel workshops of participating groups**

### Monday 24 March

**9:30-12:30 International Campaigning**  
We use the evaluation of the NATO-Game Over-action, the experiences of anti-nuclear weapon campaigns in Belgium, UK and Germany and the experiences of actions in Europe during the Iraq war as a starting point for a discussion of international campaigning strategies. The focus is on the tension between campaigning on a national level and international co-operation. We will compare strategies: what did they focus on, what role did the international context play, ... What worked, what was useful and what were the obstacles?  
We also look into the experience of the Block G8-campaign and the Castor-campaigns as a forerunner. What was done? How do you co-ordinate, organise and mobilise on such a scale?

**13:30-18:00 Planning discussion**  
How can we react to upcoming wars? We look into some war scenarios and brainstorm some possible responses. How do we react to the further development of the military intervention framework and other military policies? Concrete planning starting from an inventory of ideas and the campaigning agendas of the participating groups.

