

zeitung gegen den krieg

Nr. 42 Summer 2018

NATO – antidemocratic, warmongering	Page 2	Armament is breaking up Europe	Page 3
Protests against the NATO summit in Brussels	Page 3	The EU as an armament union (PESCO)	Page 4
UN-treaty on the nuclear ban	Page 3	Preparations for a nuclear war	Page 4

The NATO summit in Brussels and the demands of the peace movement

The threat & the dynamics of war



Without a doubt Donald, president of the leading NATO-state, is a warmonger. The, for now, positive result of the Singapore summit on the 12th of June doesn't change anything about this (cf. right column). But it is not, chiefly, a single "crazy" person who is moving the world closer to the brink of a new great war. The whole thing is systematic: We are experiencing a long-term process of preparations for war. Since the middle of the 1990s NATO has admitted 13 new countries to the alliance and has thus moved closer to the Russian border. On December 4th 2014 the US House of Representatives passed resolution 758, with 411 to 10 votes, and therewith called for the US to prepare for a war with Russia. In the same year NATO, at its summit in Newport, Wales, emphasized its demand for all member states to raise their arms expenditures to two percent of the GDP until 2024 – and thus almost doubling them in absolute numbers. All of this happened before Trump assumed the office of US president. Today Trump can refer to these warmongering processes of the past years... and press ahead with the concrete preparations for a great war. For example, at the upcoming NATO summit in Brussels on July 11th and 12th. This finds its expression in the global economy, world politics and the global armaments industry.

The global economy & war

Wars are often a continuation of capitalistic competition – mostly planned by the economic power that cannot satisfy its urge for expansion with "peaceful" competition alone anymore. This was the case with Germany before both world wars. This is the case with the US today. Trump bets on trade wars against western states and China and on "sanctions" against Russia. On June 9th Trump effectively blew up the G7 summit in Canada by withdrawing his signature from a joint communique on "free and fair trade." French president Macron concluded: "Economic nationalism leads to war! This is exactly what happened in the 1930s."

World politics & war

Since early 2018, there are monthly incidents that raise the danger of war. January 2018: Invasion of Syria by the NATO-state Turkey. February 2018: Trump threatens with a nuclear strike against North Korea. March 2018: The British government accuses Russia of the use of poison gas in Salisbury without reliable evidence. Dozens of Russian diplomats have to leave embassies and consulates in the West. April 2018: Massive missile strikes in Syria by the NATO-states USA, UK and France. A confrontation with the nuclear power Russia is accepted knowingly. May 2018: The US embassy in Israel is relocated

to Jerusalem, the conflict with the Palestinian population is deliberately fueled. May and June 2018: US-president Trump cancels the nuclear deal with Iran, even though the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) declared Iran has "abided exactly by all agreements of the deal."

The global armaments industry & war

Since the beginning of 2017 the international armaments industry is booming. The US has increased its armament expenditures between 2017 and 2018 by more than 25 percent. They have been increased from 610 billion dollars in 2017 to 700 billion US dollars in 2018 alone. German arms expenditures increased by more than 15 percent in 2017 and 2018. Saudi Arabia became the country with the third highest arms expenditures 2017, behind the US and China. The Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung observes: "The states of the Middle East have joined a downright arms race." The global armaments programs are brought to the boil with the new nuclear armament initiatives. Already under US-president Obama a 1000-billion-dollar program for the "modernization" of the US nuclear weapons was passed. This is about the development and deployment of low-yield nuclear weapons, to be able to use them in the coming wars.

And Russia and China? Without a doubt China is arming itself considerably. In 2017 Chinese armament expenses were at 228 billion US-dollars. The country is also pursuing a regional-imperialist policy and is claiming islands and atolls that do not belong to China, according to international law. Russian military expenses were at 66.3 billion US-dollars on 2017. This was 20 percent less than in the year before. Russia is "modernizing" its nuclear weapons in the same way as the US.

Overall one has to keep the relations in mind: the NATO states did spend about 950 billion dollars on armament in 2017. Together with the military expenses of numerous other western states (Japan, Australia, Saudi-Arabia, South Korea) the western armament expenses are reaching about 1,200 billion US-dollars. That is four times as high as the combined armament expenses of Russia, China and North Korea.

The dynamics of armament and the growing danger of war are coming from the west and NATO in particular. The peace movement demands: Stop all arms exports! Radical disarmament! Withdrawal from and dissolution of NATO! Use of these resources for environmental and climate protection, for aid for the global south and for help for refugees! No to NATO – no to war!

Mr. Donald Trump! The meeting in Singapore between you and Kim Jong-un, the North Korean ruler, had been "great," you say. It had been a "tremendous event of great significance" with the goal of a "permanent and stable peace settlement on the Korean Peninsula." But didn't your national security advisor John Bolton say that the "denuclearization of North Korea should follow the Libya model" in the middle of May? This "model" was comprised of Libya, as the result of negotiations, dissolving its whole (secret) nuclear program and handing over all nuclear components to US-specialists. Nonetheless the country was bombed by US jets, among others, later; Muammar al Gaddafi was murdered. Thus, the North Korean leadership was outraged by these US-comparisons between Libya and North Korea. Now, four weeks later, an "honest exchange of views?" The truth is: Cads' fighting when ended is soon mended. The foolish thing is that this is neither a wild west movie nor a private matter. Your nuclear games, Mr. Trump, and those by Mr. Kim Jong-un are threatening the lives of millions of people.

Mr. Daniel Ellsberg! You are one of the great whistleblowers and served peace, when you in 1971 leaked the secret documents ("Pentagon Papers") about the dirty war of the US in Vietnam to the US media. The movie "The Post" recently reminded us of you in an impressive way. Now, with 86 years, you have published a revealing book. Title: "The Domsday Machine. Confessions of a Nuclear War Planner." In it you portray how highly criminal the Pentagon was in the 1960s, accepting a 10 percent chance of a mutual nuclear destruction between the US and the USSR. Sadly, your new book is not just about history. It is highly topical in the face of Trump, the many military officers in Trump's cabinet and nuclear armament! (cf. page 4)

On this paper

This paper against the war is published together by the ZgK editorial team and the campaign "No to war – no to NATO." Its purpose is to inform about the upcoming NATO summit in Brussels to mobilize against this congress of militarists. Confer the information on the activities in Brussels on page 3.

NATO – History and topicality

When NATO is holding another summit in Brussels on July 11th and 12th, this is an occasion for the peace movement for a basic examination of NATO.

Claim 1

"NATO constitutes a system of collective defence whereby its independent member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party." This is the NATO-definition in the (English-language) Wikipedia.

Answer

In fact, NATO is a western military alliance that can be characterized in three ways: firstly, NATO is completely focused on US interests and US world dominance. Not by chance the NATO chain of command has always been led by a US-general or admiral since its beginning (currently four-star general Curtis M. Scaparotti). Secondly, it is a military pact which is aggressively directed against forces threatening US supremacy, ultimately always with the threat of nuclear weapons use. These used to be the Soviet Union and the states of the Warsaw Pact. Today it is Russia. Thirdly, NATO is strictly anti-democratic. In general military and wars are the negation of democracy and peace. In the case

Imprint

This „Zeitung gegen den Krieg – ZgK“ [PAPER AGAINST THE WAR] is published by Heike Hänsel Tübingen · Tobias Pflüger Tübingen · Ulrich Sander Dortmund · Bärbel Schindler-Saefkow Berlin · Laura von Wimmersperg Berlin und Winfried Wolf Michendorf. **Editors of this issue** Reiner Braun, Nils Biermann, Winfried Wolf. Supported by and in cooperation with the "International Network No to War – No to NATO."

Responsible according to the press law
Dr. Winfried Wolf.

Supporting persons, parties, initiatives and organizations Die Anstifter (Stuttgart) · Antikriegsforum Ludwigshafen · AG Frieden Trier · bundesweite Attac-AG Globalisierung und Krieg · Bremer Friedensforum · Friedensbündnis Karlsruhe · Galerie Olga Benario, Berlin · Willi Hoffmeister, Sprecher des Ostermarsches Ruhr · Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft – Vereinigte KriegsdienstgegnerInnen (DFG-VK) · Deutscher Friedensrat e.V. · Kampagne Krieg beginnt hier · LabourNet · Sozialistische Linke Karlsruhe · Bundesausschuss Friedensratschlag · Redaktion Lunapark21 · Naturwissenschaftlerinitiative Verantwortung für Frieden und Zukunftsfähigkeit · Nordbremer Bürger gegen den Krieg · Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes – Bund der Antifaschistinnen und Antifaschisten (VVN-BdA) · PapyRossa Verlag Köln · Rüstungs-Informationsbüro (RIB e.V.), Freiburg · Sozialistische Zeitung/SoZ, Köln · DIE LINKE (Parteivorstand)

design and layout Joachim Römer

Address of the editorial and circulation team
Postal address BFS e.V. · An den Bergen 112 · 14552 Michendorf · Germany

E-Mail zeitung-gegen-den-krieg@gmx.de

Purchase price and bank account

Shipping after orders to the following prices:
from 1 to 99 ex. = 25 cents per ex.
from 100 ex. on = 15 cents
Plus shipping and packaging.

Donations & bank account

The paper against the war is financed by donations and contributions towards costs by peace initiatives and individuals and by voluntary work of the authors. The BFS e.V. is recognized as a charitable organization.

Account: BFS e.V. · Mittelbrandenburgische Sparkasse · IBAN DE04 1605 0000 3527 0018 66
BIC WELADED1PMB

Registration as magazine ISSN 1611-2881



of NATO, it is visible in its history and actions that it is negating, and often suppressing, democracy and self-determination. See also answers 2 and 4.

Claim 2

NATO was founded for the defense of the "freedom" of the western states after World War 2.

Answer

This is a founding myth. In reality the understanding that fascism and capitalism are connected and that peace has to be most important goal of human co-existence existed in all of Europe – in Western and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union – after World War 2. In the West European states France, Italy and Greece the democratic, socialist and communist forces, that had become strong in the anti-fascist resistance, were the majority. At the same time there were democratic and communist movements against colonialism in Africa and Asia. In this situation anti-communist and US-friendly governments could be established in all of Western Europe with help from the US ("Marshall Plan") and the military integration with the West into the US-led NATO. Of the ten European NATO founder states (the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway) all except for Luxembourg and Norway were active colonial powers. A part of the colonial territory was explicitly part of the NATO-territory – the French colony Algeria. Principally the US supported the colonial wars that the old European powers were waging against the democratic and anti-colonial movements, also

+++ activ against war +++

Protest in Belgium against NATO nuclear weapons

Belgium is hosting the NATO headquarters in Brussels and up to 20 US-nuclear bombs in the military air base of Kleine Brogel in the east of the country, in the frame of the NATO nuclear sharing program.

For years Belgian protesters climbed the fences of the air base to trigger legal actions, but without results. Up to this day the Belgian Government keeps on 'denying nor confirming' that there are nuclear weapons in Belgium, which hinders normal parliamentary debate. Recently the air base got (expensive) new fences to prevent protesters entering the airbase. Expected is that in the timeframe of 2020-2021 new, modernised US nuclear bombs will arrive in Belgium.

Over the recent years actions, media and political work have focused more on financial institutions in Belgium investing in nuclear weapons production, the UN-treaty against nuclear weapons and the prevention of the acquisition of new dual use jet fighters. Most of the work is coordinated within the Belgian Coalition Against Nuclear Weapons and in support of international campaigns. In July the protests against NATO nuclear weapons will be part of the international manifestation and several direct actions are planned.

+++ campaign for peace +++

after World War 2: France in Indochina and Algeria, the UK in Ghana, the Netherlands in Indonesia, Portugal in Angola, Guinea and Mozambique, Belgium in Kongo. In Greece US jets bombed positions of the antifascist freedom movement with napalm in 1949, the year NATO was founded. They equipped the Greek military, which was loyal to the monarchy and had collaborated with the Nazi-occupiers before. Only in this way it could be prevented that the victorious antifascist partisans assumed the reins of government in Greece (as in Yugoslavia beforehand).

Claim 3

NATO was a response to the Western advancement of the Soviet Union and a reaction to the "Cold War"

Answer

This is confusing chicken and egg. The US-policy during the war had the goal of bleeding dry the Soviet Union during its battle against Nazi Germany. Because of this the invasion of Normandy only happened on June 6th 1944, eleven months before the end of the war. After World War 2 huge parts of the Soviet Union had been destroyed; the military power of Moscow was weak. The US, in contrast, was at the peak of its economic and military power. All steps towards a military confrontation (with the exception of the attempt to deploy Soviet nuclear missiles on Cuba 1962) were taken by the West, by NATO. The Warsaw Pact, the Soviet-dominated counterpart to NATO, was founded only six years after

NATO, on May 14th 1955. This was a direct response to West Germany (GDR) joining NATO.

Claim 4

According to its current self-portrayal NATO is "promoting democratic values." It is focused on a "peaceful resolution of conflicts." Only when "diplomatic efforts fail" NATO would have "the military power to conduct operations of crisis management."

Answer

NATO is, in principal, the undemocratic counterpart to the democratically legitimized United Nations (UN). From the outset the military alliance has been in direct contradiction of article 1 of the UN-Charter "self-determination of the peoples." NATO reserves the right to "intervene in crisis areas," i.e. wage war, also without a mandate of the UN security council. The NATO-attack on the Republic of Yugoslavia ("Kosovo war"), that began on March 24th 1999, was such a war. At that time, they did not even try to get an UN mandate. When a fascist dictatorship was established in Greece on April 21st 1967 this had no consequences for its NATO-membership. To the contrary. The coup plan "Prometheus," that was implemented back then, was a NATO plan. The NATO-member Turkey attacked Cyprus in 1974 and has occupied a part of the

island for more than four decades now. In April 2018 Turkish forces invaded Syria. But Turkey – by now an authoritarian regime – has not only remained a NATO ally. The country is also one of the most important importer of armaments from the US, Germany and France.

Claim 5

NATO protects Eastern European states from the Russian threat. This was necessary in particular after the annexation of Crimea.

Answer

This false allegation also confuses chicken and egg. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact there were manifold assertions from the West according to which NATO would not expand to the East and thus would not threaten Russia militarily. The "Two Plus Four Agreement" even states that non-German NATO troops are not allowed to be deployed permanently in the territory of the former GDR. In spite of this Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary became NATO-members in 1999 and Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia did so in 2004. With this NATO knowingly advanced closer to the Russian border. It is doing so currently with the relocation of combat units to the Baltic states and to Poland. With arms deliveries to Ukraine. And with the looming deployment of nuclear missile systems close to the Russian border.

The demands for a withdrawal from and the dissolution of NATO follow logically from the history, structure and goals of this military alliance.



Proteste against the NATO-Summit in Brussels

Make Peace great again!

As the world becomes more dangerous by the day, the need for actions for peace has never been more vital. With militarism on the rise, the need for a global people's alternative – of justice, sustainability and peace – has never been more urgent. Since NATO's last summit in 2017 we have seen an escalation of nuclear rhetoric between Trump and North Korea and frequent talk of the possibility of World War III. Trump's withdrawal from the Iran agreement and his pressure on the agreement's partners to follow him furthermore risks escalating the situation. To live in the shadow of annihilation is intolerable for humanity and we, the peoples of the world, reject this warmongering.

Since NATO's 60th anniversary summit in Strasbourg/Kehl in 2009 the international network "No to war – no to NATO" protests NATO's summits and its aggressive military and nuclear policies, which is a threat to the lives of hundreds of thousands, even millions of people and the survival of the planet, prevents the demilitarization of international politics, and blocks solutions to global challenges.

We call on all peace-loving citizens and organizations to demonstrate for their desire for peace and their vision of a just world free of war, militarization and violence on the occasion of the next NATO summit in Brussels on July 11th +12th, 2018.

Saturday, July 8th: Protest March 2018 Make Peace great again!

3 PM – Brussels North Station

For peace! Against the purchase of new fighter jets and the militarization that Trump and NATO want to enforce. We want to invest our tax money in education, health care, environment, and international solidarity! For a world without nuclear weapons!

For a livable world! We want a solidarity-based and decisive climate policy for a sustainable future.

For a tolerant society based on solidarity! We stand up for the rights of all people, based on the principles of equality and solidarity.

For social rights! We're fed up with austerity measures. Time to invest in our society. (More on <https://www.trumpnotwelcome.be>)

Sunday, July 8th // Counter-summit on „Not to war – no to NATO“

10 AM – 6 PM Brussels Institute libre Marie Haps

As the world becomes more dangerous, the need for discussions and actions for peace has never been more vital. With militarism

on the rise, the need for a global people's alternative – of justice, sustainability and peace – has never been more urgent.

Program

10.00 Uhr Welcome

10.30 Uhr Testimonials "Give the victims of NATO a face"

11.15 – 12.30 Uhr plenary: NATO: global military alliance for war, intervention and military spending | The role and importance of enemy pictures | European Militarization (PESCO) & military spending (2%) | Nuclear weapons: the biggest danger | Women, war and militarization

2:15–3:45 workshops: NATO strategy and abolition, including disarmament, nuclear weapons free world | Europe of Peace | Women and War | Drones and automatization of weapons | Arms export | Military bases | Future actions for Peace | Nuclear weapons

4.00 – 6.00 Podium: "Future non-violent actions against war, NATO and militarization – for peace, justice and disarmament" Discussion about common activities including EU elections, NATO anniversary 2019, end of World War I, modernization of nuclear weapons and B61, fighter jets F 35, and 2% of GDP for military spending

Wednesday, July 11th Protests worldwide

In the name of peace, and the future of humanity, we call for coordinated world-wide actions to take place on the eve of the Summit – on Wednesday 11th July at 5pm. Our demand to our governments is clear: we must leave NATO and NATO must be dissolved (www.no-to-nato.org).

Direct actions during the summit

A call within the non-violent direct action framework invites everyone organizing non-violent direct actions to blockade or disrupt the next NATO summit, which already has the taste for blood. Let us be creative, radical, numerous and in solidarity with all struggles against oppression and injustice. On July 11th and 12th, the NATO summit will be held in Brussels ... or not! (www.facebook.com/events/241088406461133)

Ludo de Brabander, Kristine Karch, Lucas WirI – ICC No to war – no to NATO

Why is Europe protesting against NATO

Claudia Haydt

Most of the European NATO countries spend more and more money for the military. What people in Europe get from this, is not more security. The new arms race is one-sided, while Russia is spending less money for the military, NATO states believe in more combat ready troops, more tanks and more fighter jets. Instead of cooperating with our neighbors in the east to jointly disarm and to strengthen the international law, the development of new weapon systems like killer drones and autonomous weapons continues. This divides Europe and increases the risk of war. What people in Europe urgently need, is social justice, investments in the crumbling infrastructure and huge efforts to save the environment. The NATO is the main reason why its members do not join the ban against nuclear weapons. The focus on military spending further destroys the social cohesion in Europe and helps right wing and xenophobic forces to establish themselves. To stop the hatred and violence within and between the states we have to invest in peace, not in war. We will protest against the NATO summit and make it clear that we want to overcome the obstacles for peace, to dissolve NATO and to stop the militarization of the European Union.

NATO and nuclear weapon: The king is naked

Kate Hudson

Despite their obligations through the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and repeated public commitments, NATO states have so far refused to join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The hypocrisy of such attitude can't hold very long while the path toward the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is now wide open.

Adopted at the UN by 122 states, the TPNW has already been signed by 58 States and ratified by 10. Although this unprecedented step is clearly strengthening actual nuclear disarmament obligations, NATO member countries boycotted the negotiations - except for Netherlands. When adopted, on September 2017, NATO released a bitter statement full of misinterpretations and lies. It portrayed the TPNW as being "at odds with the existing non-proliferation and disarmament architecture" and risking to "undermine the Non Proliferation Treaty". The opposite is true. The ones States that undermine the NPT are those who do not commit to their obligation to disarm through Article 6 and keep pretending they need nuclear weapons for their security! It also said that the TPNW "risks [...] creating divisions and divergences at a time when a unified approach to proliferation and security threats is required more than ever". Again, this is pure lie; the vast majority of States (159) call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and 122 support the TPNW. The division comes from those who want to keep them forever and agree to use them or see them used on their behalf!

The TPNW reveals the hypocrisy of the nuclear reliant States. Nuclear weapons are far too dangerous. There is no legal obligation for NATO states to follow blindly the deadly policy to stick with nuclear weapons forever. NATO solidarity can mean that the cleverest Member states cease the opportunity of the TPNW and lead NATO renunciation to nuclear weapons.

Claudia Haydt is member in the board on [the antimilitarist coordination] „Informationsstelle Militarisierung (IMI) e.V.“ in Tübingen, Germany · Kate Hudson is General Secretary of CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament).

Militarization of the European Union (EU)

The unpeaceful way

Reiner Braun

In the concluding document of the 2016 NATO summit in Wales the military policy of the EU is described as a “complementary to NATO, autonomous policy.” Since the Brexit-decision in 2017 the militarization of the EU has taken a giant stride.

As the last measure for now the European Parliament, the EU-Commission and the Council of the European Union decided upon the details of the “European Defence Industrial Development Programme” (EDIDP) in May 2018 – a central pillar of the European Defence Fund that had already been agreed upon last year. Thus, half a billion Euro will be made available for the years 2019 and 2020 to support military research and the industrial development of new weapon systems. For the years 2021 to 2017 13 billion Euro are budgeted.

The EDIDP is, among other things, supposed to fund the development of armed drones as well as instruments for the conduct of cyberwarfare. The development of deadly autonomous weapons is supposed to be supported explicitly. This programme is the direct promotion of a “European military-industrial-scientific complex.”

This European Defence Fund (EDF) is, alongside PESCO, the crown jewel of the current armament efforts on the EU-level.

PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) describes the cooperation of 25 of the 28 member states of the European Union. A close cooperation has been agreed upon in the realization of the following goals:

- Regular increases in the defence budget up to the goal of 2% of the GDP. This would mean an increase



of the military expenses of the EU states to circa 250 to 300 billion Euro, a doubling of the military budget in many countries.

- An increase in research spending to 2% of the respective domestic

defence budget and a tight cooperation in military research

- Execution of common, strategic military research projects that are supposed to be supported by the European Defence Fund

- Closer cooperation in the area of cyber defence. This is not only about the domination of the cyberspace. The EU includes so-called smuggling of migrants or cyberattacks on oil companies in this.

All of these phenomena have been trained for in the mutual exercises of the EU and NATO on “hybrid threats” in the fall of 2017.

- Deployment of strike forces and logistics for the EU-battlegroups. Setting up so-called anchor armies, i.e. the cooperation of the strong armies (France, Germany) with the armies of smaller states, that are supposed to be incorporated in the armies of the central states, from logistics to command. These are the first massive steps towards a European army. The German armed forces will be in charge of four of the first 17 PESCO-projects: the logistics for the redeployment of troops, a training centre for military instructors, the development of a mobile hospital and the associated medical command.
- A mutual European military infrastructure through a European military headquarter and a mutual chain of command, especially in regards to the air force, resp. the air transport units
- Mutual CSPD-operations (e.g. EUFOR), i.e. the continuation of the worldwide deployment of European troops (wars of intervention). The EU has taken part in 20 deployments abroad since 1992, currently in Mali, Somalia, Kosovo and Afghanistan among others. These deployments are supposed to be funded mutually as well.
- Improvement of the interoperability of the armed forces, their strategies and weapon systems, development of consistent weapon systems that are supposed to be exported with success as well. A European military complex is supposed to be formed.

As a side note, the European External Action Service (EEAS) includes military attachés as well.

The strategic autonomy of the EU is supposed to be strengthened, the superpower EU is supposed to “able to keep up” militarily. Peace looks differently.

Reiner Braun is Co-President of International Peace Bureau (IPB) and active in „No to war - no to NATO“.

A new approach to international relations is required

They prepare a nuclear war!

Kate Hudson

During the 2016 US presidential election campaign, Trump promised to put an end to pointless foreign wars. But in fact the Trump presidency has ushered in a new era of militarism. Trump's new defence strategy states that the US will compete for dominance against its long-term strategic competitors – Russia and China – now designated as ‘revisionist powers’ that wish to reshape the world consistent with their ‘authoritarian model’.

The new approach shifts the focus away from the Middle East, and extends Obama's focus on China to encompass the entire Eurasian landmass. With the emphasis now away from asymmetrical warfare with non-state actors to war with major powers, the risk of nuclear confrontation and war is increased. The recently published new US nuclear posture review makes

nuclear war more likely. It takes the lid off the restraints on both new-build and nuclear weapons use. The most significant element of the review is commitment to a whole new generation of nuclear weapons, with the emphasis on low-yield, often described as ‘usable’, nuclear weapons. This goes hand-in-hand with the recently announced \$1 trillion programme for nuclear weapons ‘modernization’.

Meanwhile the US continues to press other states to pay for its expansionary policies and wars. NATO's role as a nuclear-armed alliance continues, with B61 nuclear bombs, currently being upgraded to the B61-12, also to make them more ‘usable’. These are stationed in five countries across Europe – Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy and Turkey. There is strong opposition to the

siting of these weapons in Europe, including from the governments of some of the ‘host’ nations.

NATO's expansion continues as Montenegro was confirmed as the



29th member in June 2017 in spite of overwhelming popular opposition within the country. Bosnia-Herzegovina is also in negotiations to join the alliance despite the NATO bombing of that country in 1996. This continued expansion has contributed to international tension as Russia sees itself increasingly surrounded by US and NATO bases.

This process has been ongoing since the end of the Cold War, when the Warsaw Pact was dissolved, but NATO was not. Rather than scaling back its global military presence, the US moved to fill the positions vacated by its previous rival. As the countries of eastern Europe embraced free market economics and multiparty democracy, the US moved rapidly to integrate them into its sphere of influence via NATO. This proved to be an effective strategy, as witnessed by the support of those countries for the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003.

NATO's actions and inflammatory rhetoric continue to escalate tension with Russia and fears of a nuclear war are on the increase. The increasing NATO presence in the region was a major contributory factor to the conflict between Russia and Georgia in 2008 and in

the continuing crisis in Ukraine. In addition to opening new bases in eastern Europe, NATO has also opened a training centre in Georgia and will support the reform of Ukraine's military. NATO exercises are also destabilising. Deployments of troops – including British forces – arrived in Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland during 2017. The UK has major involvement in NATO exercises which take place on an enormous scale – around 100 in 2017 alone; major exercises have taken place in Scotland and recent B52 exercises over the North Sea were run from UK bases.

Worldwide, people are in need of real peace which means social justice, environmental security, equal access to resources, a warm welcome for refugees fleeing wars and oppression and more – not the squandering of vast amounts on nuclear weapons and war. A new approach to international relations is required – and NATO and its nuclear weapons have no part in that.

Information about the author: page 3.