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No to War, No to NATO, Germany

Good morning, kunichiwa.

I thank the organizers for the invitation and am happy to participate in the World Conference against A and H Bombs, even if it is "only" online and for me in the middle of the night.

I bring you the solidarity greetings of the international network No to war - no to NATO, of which I am co-spokesperson and which has been working for more than 10 years for the delegitimization and abolition of NATO in order to get closer to a more peaceful and just world without war and weapons of mass destruction, with dignity and respect for each other and the environment.

US Air Base Ramstein and Büchel

In Germany the campaign "Stop Air Base Ramstein" fights against the largest air hub of the US armed forces outside the USA.

It controls all air operations in Europe and Africa, it is the command center for the remaining 20 US nuclear weapons stored in the nearby German Bundeswehr air base Büchel. In action they are flown by German soldiers and with German airplanes. This nuclear sharing violates the NPT treaty. The modernization of the atomic bombs makes new carrier systems necessary. The German government has provided several billion euros for this purpose during the Corona crisis, although the money is urgently needed for social and ecological concerns.

Ramstein's central SATCOM relay station is essential for the illegal drone war. It handles all data exchange between drone pilots in the USA and the combat drones over Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and other areas of operation.

Let me underline some aspects of military bases.

Prostitution, sexual violence, and rape

The well-known problem of prostitution, sexual violence and rape that exists within and around the military bases has not been reduced by the fact that in many armies' women now also serve with weapons. On the contrary, these women are adapting more to the patriarchal power and domination structures inherent in the military than they can educate their male colleagues to behave more respectfully and cooperatively towards their female colleagues.

Environment

The military and the military base are also enormous polluters and destroyers of the environment, they contaminate the air, plants and animals, as well as the soil with noise, toxic chemicals and waste and damage human health. The not degradable PFAS, a substance that was still used in fire-fighting foams until the noughties of the last century, pollutes the groundwater of the air base, which is located at the edge of a water protection area. The contaminated inedible groundwater must be pumped out so that the chemicals do not diffuse into the neighboring aquifers.

The campaign Stop Air Base Ramstein

For 5 years we have been meeting once a year for action weeks against the air base in the region, we conduct a 1 week peace camp with peace workshops, an international anti-military base congress with guests from anti-base initiatives from Sicily (Sigonella), Ireland (Shannon Airport), South Korea (THAAD), USA, France and others, a public evening event in the city of Kaiserslautern, demonstrations, human chains, and blockades, including a blockade of Büchel.

Due to corona this year's peace camp and workshops in July was moved to the internet. The demonstration and the human chain as well as the international no bases conference are moved to September in Berlin. The evening event will be live streamed, and the conference will be held as a mixture, some speakers are present in Berlin, most speakers and the participants are connected via zoom. This year we have invited a peace friend from Okinawa as speaker.

Our continuous educational work is changing the mood of the population, but the people in power - especially the mayor of Ramstein - are still friends of the USA and especially of the air base.

Accordingly, he has no interest in seeing the announced withdrawal of US troops as a chance to get rid of this murderous and dirt-spilling air base and to develop plans for a conversion of the area together with the population at an early stage. Right at the top of the agenda must be the rehabilitation of the sites.

Solidarity with Okinawa

At this point I would like to send our solidarity greetings and congratulations to the peace activists in Okinawa, who have managed to bring almost the entire island into peaceful and non-violent resistance against the US military bases and the new Henoko air base. To keep up with that we in Germany have to step up our efforts even more.

NATO

NATO – Nuclear Armed Terror Organization – expanded worldwide. Its strategy is based on deterrence and the first use of nuclear weapons. It sees itself as a global actor, not only in "defense" but also in securing trade routes and resources, as a "first responder" in environmental and climate disasters, in defending against refugees and now in combating pandemics.

With Japan cooperation agreements exists since the 90s' of the last century. On 21 July 2020 NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg spoke via telephone with Japanese Defence Minister Taro Kono addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, regional security issues, and ways to further strengthen cooperation between NATO and Japan. He thanked Japan for continuing close engagement with the Alliance.

With the implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 (on women, peace, and security) NATO does not tackle the causes of violence, militarism and patriarchy but tries to also integrate women into their war activities. If NATO would be seriously interested in women's rights, in peace and security it would have to abolish itself immediately. Instead, a special representative on women's peace and security will be installed and with NATO's Civil Society Advisory Panel NATO's war logic and militarism is brought to civil society and militarization will be further promoted.

Although we are against all foreign military bases in principle, we note that the USA has the highest number of military bases outside its territory, almost 800 out of 1,000, the figures vary according to definition.

Through its NATO membership, the USA has access to the domestic and foreign military bases of other NATO members. The countries that are integrated into the network through members of GLOBAL NATO have also committed themselves to cooperate with NATO and make their military installations available to NATO for joint use.

Common actions are needed all around the world. When we want to get rid of nuclear weapons, when we want to get a world without war we have to cooperate in common actions. 75th years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki: it is time for freedom, free from the fear of war and nuclear weapons