



STOP the WAR COALITION SYDNEY

Support Libya NO WESTERN INTERVENTION



Sydney Stop the War Coalition extends its full support to the pro-democracy movement sweeping the Middle-East and North Africa.

This wave of struggle shows how real democracy is won by ordinary people demanding their rights.

It shows up the lie, peddled by Western leaders including PM Julia Gillard who has just returned from a brown-nosing trip to Washington, that democracy has to be imposed from the West and liberation means invasion.

The horrendous waste of life in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the ongoing terror caused by occupation forces supporting puppet governments, underscores the fallacy of these claims.

While the struggles for democracy continue in country after country across the Middle-East and North Africa, men and women from all walks of life are showing that the Arab

revolutions will be made by Arabs themselves.

In Libya, as the death tolls mount from the Gaddafi regime, the US and its allies are openly discussing plans to invade: the setting up a no-fly zone amounts to this.

The West's belated concern for the fate of the Libyans being attacked by the Gaddafi regime is pure hypocrisy. The West's main concern is about protecting Libya's oil installations.

Sydney Stop the War Coalition is opposed to Western intervention in Libya and we support the movements for self-determination across the Middle East and North Africa.

Furthermore, we call for an end to the massacres and for Gaddafi to step down; for the immediately release all political prisoners and for an end to Western powers' arms trade with Libya.

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Wiping out al-Qaeda in Afghanistan was the reason given for the US invasion in 2001.

Ten years later, even the US command admits al-Qaeda is not a force. Afghanistan's proximity to the oil- and gas-bearing Asian republics is the main reason for the brutal US-NATO occupation.

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates is now claiming that the 132,000 US-NATO troops may need to remain beyond President Obama's time limit of 2014.

This is despite growing opposition to the war in the US and Afghanistan – and no evidence that the country's social and economic indicators are improving.

Afghan civilian deaths continue to rise, according to the United Nations mission. No-one knows the exact numbers. Predator drones and helicopter attacks on supposed insurgents (there is no no-fly zone for Afghanistan) mean that Afghan women and children continue to be massacred. On March 1, nine children were killed by a helicopter attack.

Last year – 2010 – was the worst year for US troop deaths since 2001. To date, 23 Australian soldiers have died there.

Domestic pressure to leave has been building: Holland has withdrawn its troops, Canada is planning to by mid-year and Germany by the end of 2011. The British are discussing scaling back, and Poland and Lithuania have just announced they are withdrawing.

But PM Julia Gillard, lock-step with the US, is spruiking the need to stay. Australians largely disagree. There is no peace or democracy for a country under occupation.

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