

# Northern Friends Peace Bulletin



## Issue 5 January/February 2003

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Dear Friends,

This Bulletin pulls together some responses and proposals for non-military action required in the light of the threatened war against Iraq. We hope this helps. Remember that our web site is regularly updated with relevant links and resources.

In peace, *Philip Austin, Co-ordinator*

**From an international Quaker statement, issued 29 November 2002**

**U.N. RESOLUTION ON IRAQ CALLS FOR COMPLIANCE AND COMMITMENT BY ALL, SAY QUAKER ORGANIZATIONS** (full text: <http://www.afsc.org/iraq/guide/quakersonres1441.shtm>)

Since the events of 11 September 2001, we have been deeply concerned that member states should remain fully committed to the multilateral approach to resolving conflict and realizing justice and peace in the world. Threats of war against Iraq as a means of compliance with UN resolutions and "regime change", advanced by the United States, have heightened this concern. **Quakers are steadfastly against the threat or use of war or military intervention as a means to resolve any conflict or bring about change.** In this light, we commend the United Nations and the Security Council for their efforts to find a resolution that would address the genuine concerns at hand concerning Iraq, to seek a peaceful solution, and to contain the threat of unilateral action by states' governments.

... **we believe that war with Iraq is not inevitable.** An agreed upon process has been approved by the SC, its Member States, and Iraq. This said, compliance by Iraq to the directive to disarm is an absolute necessity if war is to be prevented. In turn, Member States of the UN are bound to abide in good faith by the commitments made in SCR 1441 to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and the process outlined.

**The humanitarian costs of war are enormous** and, under the UN Charter, Member States are committed to pursuing peaceful solutions to prevent the scourge of war. We urge continued dialogue and cooperation amongst all concerned parties as this process unfolds.

### Signatories:

David C. Atwood, Representative, Disarmament and Peace, Quaker United Nations Office Geneva, Switzerland

Margaret Clare Ford, Clerk, Canadian Friends Service Committee, Toronto, Canada

Mary E. Lord, Director, Peace Building Unit, American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia, USA

Jack Patterson, Representative, Quaker United Nations Office - New York, New York City, USA

Jeremy Routledge, Director, Quaker Peace Centre, Cape Town, South Africa

Joe Volk, Executive Secretary, Friends Committee on National Legislation, Washington, DC USA

Martina Weitsch and Elizabeth Scurfield, Joint Representatives/Head of Office Quaker Council for European Affairs, Brussels, Belgium

From: **Canadian Bishops' statement on Iraq crisis**

**"WAR WILL NOT DELIVER LASTING DISARMAMENT"** OTTAWA, JAN. 23, 2003

**We believe we must put the people of Iraq first.**

Iraq has become a place of extraordinary suffering, and war would only add to it. Even without war, these hardships will remain the primary reality for the people of Iraq for the foreseeable future. The tragedy of Iraq has been decades in the making, and the road to genuine transformation will be slow and troubled. The only reasonable certainty they face is that the costs of war would be even worse than the current situation and would delay, not hasten, the advent of sustainable change. We believe it is our collective responsibility to accompany the people of Iraq, not with more bombs and missiles, but with moral, political and material support.

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**We believe it is time to act for peace, not war.**

1. **Reject further war** on Iraq -- the consequences of which are borne primarily by the people;
2. Persist in a **vigorous strategy of containment** to prevent Iraq's acquisition and/or retention of weapons of mass destruction through internationally mandated inspections and ongoing monitoring;
3. **Pursue diplomacy** toward establishing the entire Middle East as a region free of all weapons of mass destruction;
4. **End the comprehensive economic sanctions** against Iraq;
5. **Embark on diplomatic and political engagement**, including material support for Iraqi civil society, to advance respect for human rights and accountable governance;
6. **Reinvigorate diplomatic efforts with states of the region** to address outstanding issues, notably the Israel/Palestine conflict, in the context of region-wide talks on security and co-operation in the Middle East; and
7. **Explore legal/judicial and other measures** to address accusations of crimes against humanity.

**LETTER FROM BAGHDAD**, from Scilla Ellworthy and others, Jan 2003, letter reporting recent visit by an international delegation to Iraq and recommendations including: (full report available from NFPB and on [www.nfpb.gn.apc.org/letbagd.htm](http://www.nfpb.gn.apc.org/letbagd.htm))

1. The free press and NGOs must speedily step up their **analysis and reporting** to challenge disinformation about the realities in Iraq.
2. Whenever you hear a news broadcast on Iraq which does not mention something about **ordinary people**, call them to ask for some human interest stories. Iraq is not one man, it is 26 million fellow citizens.
3. The **European Union** has a substantial potential role to play. A consistent well-structured mediation process could be offered.
4. If you are yourself willing, go to Baghdad to become part of the **Civilian Protection** that has already begun with contingents from Spain, the US and Austria.
5. Ask your **parliamentary committee for foreign affairs** whether they have visited Iraq to see for themselves and if not, why not. Ask them to talk to Iraqi people at all levels.
6. Make it known that the 12-year **sanctions regime has had the opposite effect to that intended**; it has put Saddam Hussein in total control of the Iraqi people, through the rationing programme.
7. Prime ministers and presidents world-wide need to understand the **strength and urgency of public opposition** to this proposed attack.
9. Urge your government to support the development of a **new security regime for the whole region**, honouring UN SC Resolution 687 requiring that the Middle East shall become a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

**SEE ALSO:** *The crisis over Iraq: the non-military solution* Scilla Ellworthy 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2003, available on 'Open Democracy' web site at: <http://www.opendemocracy.net>

**SIX THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR PEACE:**

- Continue communicating with your MP.
- Write a letter to the editor of local or national press, participate in radio phone-ins etc..
- Initiate anti-war activities / discussion in local organisations.
- Continue to be a visible presence for peace - badges, stickers, banners and posters available from NFPB and QPSW - see below. Support local vigils as well as such events as the national Stop the War demonstrations in London and Glasgow on 15<sup>th</sup> February.
- Stay informed: visit NFPB ([www.nfpb.gn.apc.org](http://www.nfpb.gn.apc.org)) or the QPSW ([www.quaker.org.uk/peaceact.html](http://www.quaker.org.uk/peaceact.html)) websites for plenty of starting points.
- Keep in touch, with NFPB (contact details at the top) and with other Friends through Quaker newsletters and email discussion and information-sharing lists.