

SPEECH OF PRESIDENT WPC - ENGLISH

Illustrious Mrs. Sheikh Hasina, Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh

Illustrious Mr. Mr. Abdur Razzaq MP, Honorable President of the Bangladesh Peace Council.

Illustrious Mrs. Dr. Engr. M. A. Quassem, Honorable General Secretary of the Bangladesh Peace Council

Ladies and gentlemen of the Peace Committee of Bangladesh and other countries here represented.

Dear Friends of Peace

Comrades,

This Conference is born as a historical meeting for several reasons. Firstly, the presence of the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, which shows the real interest of his government in the quest for peace and this is a fact that deserves attention from those who, anywhere in the world, call for Peace

This moment is historic also because it occurs in a context of growing aggression of U.S. imperialism and the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) around the world. North Africa, the Middle East and much of Asia are suffering every day new attacks with invading countries, bombing that hit civilians, spreading terror, death and destruction on all sides.

The aggression against Libya, which extrapolates all the principles of sovereignty and self-determination of peoples, with bombings that target and kill civilians, in a sequence of destructive acts. The initial decision of the UN Security Council, to create a no-fly zone, has paved the way for a war of plunder, which is now also applies in the case of Syria. These are actions that simply reproduce a policy that has long been practicing imperialism in the region. But it is not only in that part of the world.

Here in Asia, it remains the overwhelming presence in Afghanistan, with serious assaults also to Pakistan. Peace will not return to that region until they are withdrawn American troops deployed there to fear and terror. Physical control of these territories, with heavy weapons, spreading death, destruction and permanent psychological pressure can no longer be tolerated.

The arguments used by the imperialist powers to contradict their own actions in Asia. The insidious U.S. approach to India which involves the development of nuclear weapons, was clearly designed to threaten China, trying to isolate that country, with Vietnam, support socialism as a path for humanity. And a permanent presence in Japan, with many bases, explicit and hidden, humiliate its people and that serve a broad military control of the entire region.

Nowadays, if someone randomly put your finger on the world map, certainly will point an indicator site of any military base of great powers. There are so many US war facilities and from other members of

the North Atlantic Treaty (NATO) as well, which all countries of the world are closely watched and intimidated at every turn.

Also the oceans and seas are all full of imperialist military vessels, ready to go online anytime, anywhere. They are forces that are constantly moving, in a dark and menacing parade of arrogance and prepotency. A larger example of this increased control is the alarming increase of American naval presence in the Indian Ocean.

And in the nuclear field, which serves as justification for invasions and aggressions, the war industry has received continuous encouragement of the government of Barak Obama. It is not possible today to safely scale the size of the US nuclear arsenal, but it is certain that this is a permanent threat to all humanity.

We are living in a world that is as if the families of our urban communities and rural areas sleep every night with an armed policeman on their doors and roofs. It is how the nations of the world are dealt with the aggravation that these core countries, despite the mounting economic crisis in 2009 increased at an alarming spending on weapons and military actions in 2010 and early 2011, specially the United States of America.

According confirmation of the International Institute of the Stockholm Peace Research (SIPRI), during the worst year of the current economic crisis, which was 2009, the government in Washington has increased by 7.2% its spending on military equipment. This means an expense of 661 billion dollars, or 41 billion dollars more than the previous year.

The structure of the of US Army, which is different from most other nations around the world, makes today maintaining its close to a thousand military bases throughout the world. There is a close command, but with tentacles decentralized agile with great autonomy of action.

This structure is divided so as to confuse its mode of action. The United States Army is the only force keeping in activity in March 2011, about 380,000 components, men, women, and administrative staff.

Extraordinary expenses with personnel today are comparable only to the peaks occurred in the World War II and the wars in Korea and Vietnam. Official data from the US Department of Defense account for a contingent of about 2.4 million people engaged. Of this total, 1.5 million are in regular military service, but some 900.000 are considered "additional ". That is, they are mercenaries employees in actions worldwide.

The largest populations are in Afghanistan (71,000 persons), Iraq (50,000), Germany (53,000), Japan (36,000), Republic of Korea (30,000). But a huge effective is spread over 135 countries where there are about 850 military bases in that country.

In the air service there is the United States Air Force, which maintains a staff of 40 000 men and about 2,000 aircraft and helicopters. However, this force only takes care of activities from solid ground, i.e., the aircraft operated from ships are the Navy aircraft.

US Navy, which is the most expansive and sprawling of the three arms of the USA, is divided into three parts. The first is the U.S. Navy, with its fearsome fleets of warships and aircraft carriers. The second is the Marine Corps, combining forces operated ashore from naval support. And the third is the Coast Guard, with the regular forces that are confused by the Army.

This entire structure is subject to the Secretary of Defense, which has ministerial status and responds to the US Defense Department, headed by the president of the USA.

I'm talking about these numbers because they are important to see that the military power of the United States and NATO is growing visibly. And to remind us to spread them in our countries, because they are real radiograph of power that threatens the planet. And the same official discourse of these powers is aggressive and threatening, contradicting the global trend of people seeking the end of authoritarianism, the end of domination, the end of the attacks and the start of a world of peace and prosperity for all. A World War III certainly would represent the end of Humanity.

Gathered in Havana, Cuba, in the last 29 days and 30 April, the Executive Committee of the World Peace Council issued document reaffirming their positions with respect to threats to peace around the world. Now, here in Bangladesh, this Asian-Pacific Peace Conference, we focus our attention on that part of the world seriously threatened.

The initiative of the Bangladesh Peace Council It is very laudable, it represents an important effort to deepen the knowledge of a situation that is very specific, but is also a reproduction of what happens in the rest of the world. This identifies the need for increasingly strong unifying increasingly our struggle on the different continents.

It will leave ideas and positions that enhance our fight to find out the new world order for sustainable peace and development, to demand the freezing of the Conflicts and to combat the militarism, the fundamentalism and the terrorism in EVERY parts of the Planet.

I'm sure that we will leave this Conference more empowered, with more solidarity and united than when we arrived. And so we will follow.

Down with imperialism! Save the Peace and Freedom!

Thank you very much,

Socorro Gomes
President of World Peace Council