

Peace in Iraq is an Option

Le Feyt Declaration

By [International Anti Occupation Network](http://anti-occupation.org)
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The undersigned, friends of Iraq from France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Portugal, the United States of America, Egypt, Sweden and Iraq, organized in the International Anti-Occupation Network (IAON) and gathered in Le Feyt, France, from 25 to 27 August 2008, have adopted the following position and declaration reflecting our commitment to a true end to the occupation and to a lasting, sustainable peace in Iraq.

27 August 2008, Le Feyt, France

The US occupation of Iraq is illegal and cannot be made legal. All that has derived from the occupation is illegal and illegitimate and cannot gain legitimacy. These facts are incontrovertible. What are their consequences?

Peace, stability and democracy in Iraq are impossible under occupation. Foreign occupation is opposed by nature to the interests of the occupied people, as proven by the six million Iraqis displaced both inside and outside Iraq, the planned assassination of Iraqi academics and professionals and the destruction of their culture, and the more than one million killed.

Propaganda in the West tries to make palatable the absurdity that the invader and destroyer of Iraq can play the role of Iraq's protector. The convenient fear of a "security vacuum" — used to perpetuate the occupation — ignores the fact that the Iraqi army never capitulated and forms the backbone of the Iraqi armed resistance. That backbone is concerned only with defending the Iraqi people and Iraq's sovereignty. Similarly, projections of civil war ignore the reality that the Iraqi population overwhelmingly, by number and by interest, rejects the occupation and will continue to do so.

In Iraq, the Iraqi people resist the occupation by all means, in accordance with international law¹. Only the popular resistance can be recognized to express and defend the Iraqi people's interests and will. Until now the United States is blind to this reality, hoping that a "diplomatic surge", following the military surge of effective ethnic cleansing, will secure a government it imposes on Iraq. Regardless of who wins the upcoming US presidential election, the US can never achieve its imperial goals and the forces it imposes on Iraq are opposed to the interests of the Iraqi people.

Some in the West continue to justify the negation of popular sovereignty under the rubric of the "war on terror", criminalizing not only resistance², but also humanitarian assistance to a

besieged people. Under international law the Iraqi resistance constitutes a national liberation movement. Recognition of the Iraqi resistance is consequently a right, not an option³. The international community has the right to withdraw recognition from the US-imposed government in Iraq and recognize the Iraqi resistance.

It is evident that Iraq cannot recover lasting stability, unity and territorial integrity until its sovereignty is guaranteed. It is also evident that the US occupation cannot avoid accountability by trying to switch responsibility to Iraq's neighbors. A pact of non-aggression, development and cooperation between a liberated Iraq and its immediate neighbors is the obvious means by which to achieve this stability⁴. In its median geopolitical position, and given its natural resources, a liberated, peaceful and democratic Iraq is central to the welfare and development of its neighbors. All of Iraq's neighbors should recognize that stability in Iraq serves their own interests and commit to not interfering in its internal affairs.

If the international community and the United States are interested in peace, stability and democracy in Iraq they should accept that only the Iraqi resistance — armed, civil and political — can achieve these by securing the interests of the Iraqi people. The first demand of the Iraqi resistance is the unconditional withdrawal of all foreign forces illegally occupying Iraq — including private contractors — and disbanding all armed forces established by the occupation.

The Iraqi anti-occupation movement — in all its expressions — in defending the Iraqi people is the only force empowered to ensure democracy in Iraq. Across the spectrum of this movement it is agreed that upon US withdrawal a temporary administrative government would be charged with two tasks: preparing the ground for democratic elections and reconstituting the national army. Upon completion of these tasks the administrative government would disband, leaving decisions regarding reparations, development and reconstruction to a sovereign and freely elected Iraqi government in a state of all its citizens without religious, ethnic, confessional or gender discrimination.

All laws, contracts, treaties and agreements signed under occupation are unequivocally null and void. According to international law and the will of the Iraqi people, total sovereignty of Iraqi oil and all natural, cultural and material resources rests in the hands of the Iraqi people, in all its generations, past, present and future. Across the spectrum of the Iraqi anti-occupation movement all agree that Iraq should sell its oil on the international market to all states not at war with Iraq, and in line with Iraq's obligations as a member of OPEC.

The 2003 US invasion was and remains illegal and the law of state responsibility demands that states refuse to recognize the consequences of illegal state acts⁵. State responsibility also includes a duty to restore. Compensation should be paid by all state and non-state actors that profited from the destruction and plundering of Iraq.

The Iraqi people are longing for long-term peace. On the basis of the 2005 Istanbul conclusions of the World Tribunal on Iraq⁶, and in recognition of the tremendous suffering of the aggressed Iraqi people, the signatories to this declaration endorse the abovementioned principles for peace, stability and democracy in Iraq.

The sovereignty of Iraq rests in the hands of its people in resistance. Peace in Iraq is simple to attain: unconditional US withdrawal and recognition of the Iraqi resistance that by definition represents the will of the Iraqi people.

We appeal to all peace loving people in the world to work to support the Iraqi people and its resistance. The future of peace, democracy and progress in Iraq, the region and the world depends on this.

Please circulate this statement widely

Members of the International Anti-Occupation Network :

Abdul Ilah Albayaty, member of the BRussells Tribunal Executive Committee, France - Iraq
Hana Al Bayaty, Coordinator of the Iraqi International Initiative on refugees, France - Egypt
Dirk Adriaensens, member of the BRussells Tribunal Executive Committee, Belgium
John Catalinotto, International Action Center, USA
Ian Douglas, Coordinator of the International Initiative to Prosecute US Genocide in Iraq, UK - Egypt
Max Fuller, Author of For Iraq, the Salvador Option Become Reality and Crying Wolf, death squads in Iraq, UK - Crying Wolf
Paola Manduca, Scientist, New Weapons Committee, Italy
Sigyn Meder, member of the Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, Sweden
Cristina Meneses, member of the Portuguese session of the World Tribunal on Iraq, Portugal
Mike Powers, member of the Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm, Sweden
Manuel Raposo, member of the Portuguese session of the World Tribunal on Iraq, Portugal
Manuel Talens, writer, member of Cubadebate, Rebelión and Tlaxcala, Spain
Paloma Valverde, member of the Spanish Campaign Against the Occupation and for the Sovereignty of Iraq (CEOSI), Spain

International figures who join us in our commitment to a true end to the occupation and to a lasting, sustainable peace in Iraq :

Ramsey Clark, former U.S. Attorney General, international human rights activist, founder of the International Action Center - USA
Admiral Vishnu Bhagwat, former Chief of Naval Staff — India
Cynthia McKinney, Green Party US Presidential Candidate - USA
Denis Halliday, Former UN Assistant Secretary General & United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq 1997-98 - Ireland
Hans von Sponeck, Former UN Assistant Secretary General & United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq 1998-2000 - Germany
François Houtart, Director of the Tricontinental Center (Cetri), spiritual father and member of the International Committee of the World Social Forum of Porto Alegre, Executive Secretary of the Alternative World Forum, President of the International League for rights and liberation of people and president of the BRussells Tribunal - Belgium
Socorro Gomes, Chairwoman of WPC - World Peace Council and of Cebrapaz - Brazilian Center of Solidarity with Peoples and Struggle for Peace - Brazil
José Francisco Gallardo Rodríguez, General Major and PhD. in Public Administration - Mexico
Manik Mukherjee, Deputy, International Affairs, Socialist Unity Center of India, General Secretary, International Anti-imperialist and People's Solidarity Coordinating Committee - India
Eduardo Galeano, Essayist, journalist, historian, and activist - Uruguay
Harold Pinter, Author, Nobel Prize in Literature 2005 - UK
James Petras, Author - USA
Jan Myrdal, Author - Sweden
Michael Parenti, Author - USA

Peter Curman, Author – Sweden
 Rosa Regàs, Author – Spain
 Santiago Alba Rico, Author, philosopher, member of Rebellion, Spain – Tunisia
 William Blum, Author, USA
 Issam Chalabi, former Iraqi Oil Minister, Iraq/Jordan
 Dr. Omar Al Kubaisy, senior iraqi cardiologist, anti occupation politician and activist on iraq health & medical situation
 Dr. Saeed H. Hasan, Former Iraqi Permanent Representative to the United Nations – Iraq
 Dr. Saadallah Al-Fathi, former head of the Energy Studies Department at OPEC – Iraq
 Salah Omar Al Ali, ex iraqi minister/ex Iraq’s ambassador to UN
 Faruq Ziada, Former Iraqi Ambassador
 Majid Al Samarai, former Iraqi ambassador
 Wajdi A. Mardan, writer and Iraqi Diplomat
 Naji Haraj, former Iraqi diplomat, human rights activist
 Ridha Al Ridha, President of Iraqi Ja’fari shiits association: Al Ja’faria
 Hassan T. Walli Aydinli, President of the Committee for the Defence of the Iraqi Turkmens’ Rights – Belgium-Iraq
 Saif Al din Al Douri, Iraqi writer and researcher
 Sabah Al-Mukhtar, President of the Arab Lawyers Association – Iraq / UK
 Mohammed Younis Alobaidi, Oil Expert, Petroleum Consultancy Group (PCG) Board Member
 Prof. Dr. Zuhair Al Sharook, Former President of Mosul University, Iraq
 Dr. Abdul Razaq M. Al Dulaimi, Dean of college of communication in Baghdad before the invasion
 “Hana Ibrahim”, Chair of Women’s Will Organisation – Iraq
 Mohammed Aref, Science writer – Iraq / UK
 Muhamad Tareq Al-Deraji, Director of Monitoring net of human rights in Iraq – President of CCERF – Fallujah
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 Buthaina al Nasiri, author and activist, iraq-egypt
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 Nermeen Al-Mufti, Former co-director of Occupation Watch – Journalist – Iraq
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 Nada Kassass, activist, Egypt
 Arab Lotfy, artist and activist, Resistance Alliance, Lebanon- Egypt
 Dr Sahera Al Abta, Academic, Doctor in biology, Faculty of Science, Iraq/Amman
 Sabah Al-Khozai, Academic & Politician
 Yihia Abu Safi, searcher and activist, committies RIGHT TO RETURN palestinian, member of Resistance Alliance-Cairo
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 Ghali Hassan, Independent writer living in Sydney, Australia
 Yasar Mohammed Salman Hasan, computer science and business management – UK
 Abdul Wahab Hamid Rashid, Iraq/Sweden
 Asma Darwish Al-Haidari, Economist and Activist – Amman
 Dr. Curtis F.J. Doebbler, International Human Rights Lawyer – USA
 Karen Parker, Attorney , Association of Humanitarian Lawyers, partners of the BRussells

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April Hurley, MD, Iraq Peace Team, Baghdad 2003 – California, USA

Azildin Bin Hussain Al Qutamil, Arab Avant Guard-blog – Tunis

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Carmen Bohorquez, philosopher, Coordinator of the network of networks In Defense of Humanity – Venezuela

Dr. Chandra Muzaffar, President of JUST International – Malaysia

Claudio Moffa, Professor of History – Italy

Corinne Kumar, Secretary General of El Taller International – Tunisia / India

Dahr Jamail, independent journalist, author: Beyond the Green Zone: Dispatches from an Unembedded Journalist in Occupied Iraq – USA

David Hungerford, antiwar activist – USA

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Dirk Tuypens, Actor – Belgium

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Eric Goeman, coordinator ATTAC – Belgium

Fausto Giudice, Writer, translator, activist, member of Tlaxcala – Italy/France

Felicity Arbuthnot, Journalist – UK

Frank Verduyssen, Actor, TG Stan – Belgium

Dr. Gideon Polya, scientist, author of Body Count, Global avoidable mortality since 1950, Australia

Gie van den Berghe, professor University of Ghent – Belgium

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Gilberto López y Rivas, anthropologist – Mexico

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Kris Smet, Former Journalist – Belgium

Larry Holmes, Troops Out Now Coalition – USA

LeiLani Dowell, Fight Imperialism, Stand Together - USA
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Lolo Rico, screenwriter - Spain
Ludo De brabant, Vrede, Peace Organisation - Belgium
Luz Gomez Garcia, Lecturer. Universidad Autonoma de Madrid - Spain
Manlio Dinucci, journalist Il Manifesto - Italy
Marc Vandepitte, philosopher - Belgium
Maria McGavigan, Institute for Marxist Studies, Brussels
Dr Mario Novelli, Lecturer in International Development, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands
Maruja Torres, writer and journalist - Spain
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Michel Collon, author, journalist - Belgium
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Stéphane Lathion, swiss scholar (Fribourg University) - President of the GRIS (Research Group on Islam in Switzerland).
Stephen Eric Bronner, Professor of political science, Rutgers University - USA
Stevan Kirschbaum, Chair Grievance Committee United Steel Workers 8751 - USA
Steve Gillis, Vice President, United Steel Workers Local 8751 - USA
Teresa Gutierrez, May 1st Coalition for Immigrant and Worker Rights Co-Coordinator and Deputy Secretary General International Migrant Alliance (organizations for ID only) - USA
Dr. Thomas M. Fasy, MD PhD, Clinical Associate Professor, Mount Sinai School of Medicine - USA
Víctor Flores Olea, writer and political scientist - Mexico

Endorsing Organisations :

All India Anti-imperialist Forum - India
BRussells Tribunal - Belgium
CEOSI - Spain
Conscience International - USA
El Taller International - Tunisia
INTAL - Belgium
International Action Center - USA
International Anti-imperialist and People's Solidarity Coordinating Committee
The Iraq Solidarity Association in Stockholm (IrakSolidaritet) - Sweden
Medical Aid For The Third World - Belgium
Muslim Peacemaker Teams - Iraq
Palestine Think Tank (Free Minds for a Free Palestine)
Tlaxcala, The Translators' (Global) Network for Linguistic Diversity
US Academics for Peace - USA
World Courts of Women
Collateral Repair Project (www.collateralrepairproject.org)

We encourage the international peace movement, civil society and politicians to follow their example :

1 The right to self-determination, national independence, territorial integrity, national unity, and sovereignty without external interference has been affirmed numerous times by a number of UN bodies, including the UN Security Council, UN General Assembly, UN Commission on Human Rights, the International Law Commission and the International Court of Justice. The principle of self-determination provides that where forcible action has been taken to suppress this right, force may be used in order to counter this and achieve self-determination.

The Commission on Human Rights has routinely reaffirmed the legitimacy of struggling against occupation by all available means, including armed struggle (CHR Resolution No. 3 XXXV, 21 February 1979 and CHR Resolution No. 1989/19, 6 March 1989). Explicitly, UN General Assembly Resolution 37/43, adopted 3 December 1982: "Reaffirms the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples for independence, territorial integrity, national unity and liberation from colonial and foreign domination and foreign occupation by all available means, including armed struggle." (See also UN General Assembly Resolutions 1514, 3070, 3103, 3246, 3328, 3382, 3421, 3481, 31/91, 32/42 and 32/154).

2 Article 1(4) of the 1st Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, 1977, considers self-determination struggles as international armed conflict situations. The Geneva Declaration on Terrorism states: "As repeatedly recognized by the United Nations General Assembly, peoples who are fighting against colonial domination and alien occupation and against racist regimes in the exercise of their right of self-determination have the right to use force to accomplish their objectives within the framework of international humanitarian law. Such lawful uses of force must not be confused with acts of international terrorism."

3 National liberation movements are recognized as the consequence of the right of self-determination. In the exercise of their right to self-determination, peoples under colonial and alien domination have the right "to struggle ... and to seek and receive support, in accordance with the principles of the Charter" and in conformity with the Declaration on

Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States. It is in these terms that Article 7 of the Definition of Aggression (General Assembly Resolution 3314 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974) recognizes the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples under colonial or alien domination. Recognition by the UN of the legitimacy of the struggle of peoples under colonial and alien domination or occupation is in line with the general prohibition of the use of force enshrined in the UN Charter as a state that forcibly subjugates a people to colonial or alien domination is committing an unlawful act as defined by international law, and the subject people, in the exercise of its inherent right of self-defence, may fight to defend and attain its right to self-determination.

4 The Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States (General Assembly Resolution 2625 (XXV)) cites the principle that, "States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations." Individually and collectively, Iraq and its neighbors would commit to refrain from the use of force or threat of the use of force, facilitating the use of force or threat of use of force by other actors, and refraining from all forms of interference in the affairs of other states. Individually and collectively, Iraq and its neighbors would also commit to cooperation and development on the basis of negotiation, arbitration and mutual advantage.

5 Article 41(2) of the United Nations International Law Commission's Draft Articles on State Responsibility, representing the rule of customary international law (adopted in UN General Assembly Resolution 56/83 of 28 January 2002, "Responsibility of States for Internationally Wrongful Acts"), prevents states from benefiting from their own illegal acts: "No State shall recognize as lawful a situation created by a serious breach [of an obligation arising under a peremptory norm of general international law]"; Section III, UN General Assembly Resolution 36/103 of 14 December 1962, "Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States".

6 Declaration of the Jury of Conscience, World Tribunal on Iraq, Istanbul, 23-27 June 2005.

7 The International Anti-occupation Network is a coalition of groups that stand in solidarity with the Iraqi people and for Iraqi sovereignty and against the US-led occupation of Iraq. It was established in April 2006 at the Madrid International Seminar on the Assassination of Iraqi Academics and Health Professionals, the final resolution of which can be read here.

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