

The US defense strategy to “rebalance Asia”: U.S. TROOPS OUT OF THE PHILIPPINES! STOP THE BALIKATAN MILITARY EXERCISES!

By [Global Research](#)

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Bayan Canada 16 April 2012

Region: [Asia](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Montreal Demo: Monday, April 15, 2012 @ 5:30pm in front of US Consulate

Some of the Filipino organizations in Montreal supported by ILPS-Canada will be holding a short demonstration tomorrow, Monday, April 16 in front of the US consulate on Rene Levesque and Saint Alexandre near McGill or Square Victoria metro. The demonstration is happening between 5:30pm to about 6:30pm. It is in solidarity with large rallies happening in the Philippines against the start of the Balikatan military exercises between the US and Philippines troops. It is part of the US military build up in the region as the “new” US defense strategy to “rebalance Asia”... For more info, please read the Attached statement. Your presence and solidarity will be much appreciated. Reference: Joey Calugay mayan.canada.noc@gmail.com 514-342-2111

U.S. TROOPS OUT OF THE PHILIPPINES! STOP THE BALIKATAN MILITARY EXERCISES!

Bayan Canada vehemently opposes the Balikatan exercises to be held this April 16th to the 27th in the Philippines. Balikatan, meaning shoulder-to-shoulder, refers to joint military exercises between the US and Philippines. The Philippine government justifies these exercises as being based on the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) and the 14- year-old Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) between the two countries.

Philippine President Benigno Aquino III is hell bent on accommodating the “new” US defense strategy that entails a so-called “rebalance to Asia”, including an increase in US military presence in the Philippines. With China’s economic growth threatening US domination over the region, the Obama administration announced earlier this year the shift in its military focus away from Iraq and Afghanistan and to renew its commitment to re-asserting its position in the Asia-Pacific.

The Aquino government is betraying the 1991 Philippine Senate decision to shut down the US bases in the Philippines. Its recent dialogue with the US government lays down the groundwork for the consolidation of the Philippines as a key US military base location, serving as a permanent staging ground for US military offensives, storage space for surveillance drones, resupply and refueling station for US warships and aircrafts, as well as rest and recreational facility for US servicemen.

The Aquino administration is aligning the Philippines with an American military strategy that

will threaten peace in the entire Asia-Pacific region. In an effort to boost up its military-industrial complex at the expense of the surrounding countries, the US government is in fact provoking military aggression and creating a war-like situation against China.

While Bayan Canada along with the Filipino people are for a peaceful resolution to territorial and maritime disputes with other nations, we are opposed to the use or threat of force from any party including China. With the buildup of US military forces in the region, the disputes are exacerbated and tension rises. The US is only out for its own hegemonic interests in the region and not for the security and prosperity of the Filipino people.

Recent news reports claim that more than twenty-two thousand people will benefit from the Balikatan through civil-military operations during the exercises. Promises of new schools and clinics built in far flung areas and medical and dental treatments offered by US and Philippine forces during the military exercises are the usual protocol for “winning hearts and minds” by American forces during occupations. Worse, these practices have been exposed as nothing more than intelligence gathering for US and Philippine forces.

The Filipino people will not be fooled by candy-coated military invasions. We ask our compatriots in Canada along with our friends and allies to join our voices with the Filipino people in demanding an abrogation of the VFA and the immediate withdrawal of US troops from the Philippines.

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