



Stop the military buildup!

GUAHAN COALITION for PEACE & JUSTICE

For a Nuclear Free, Peaceful, Just, Sustainable World Conference

30 April—1 May 2010

Riverside Church, New York City, New York

Background on Guam *by Women for Genuine Security*

Approximately 30 miles long and 8 miles wide, Guam is currently home to over 100 toxic sites. The island and surrounding regions use as a military dumping ground since World War II is evidenced today in the record high cancer rates among the population. The military currently occupies 1/3 of the island and now proposes additional land takings. Guam has lived under US administration since 1898 and remains a US colony, one of 16 non-self-governing territories listed by the United Nations.

The proposed Defense Department plan involves moving 8,600 Marines and their 7,000 dependents from Futenma Marine Air Station (Okinawa, Japan) to Guam by 2014; the acquisition of 2,200 additional acres for military use, including live fire training, the expansion of Andersen Air Force Base, and the dredging of 71 acres of vibrant coral reef in Apra Harbor.

Large numbers of contracted workers would also be sent to actualize the Guam buildup, boosting the U.S. territory's population by 45 percent -- adding another 79,000 people to its current 180,000 residents. ([Greenwire](#) Feb 25).

Since the release of the DEIS on November 30, 2009, community groups in Guam have been organizing to have their concerns be heard.

One such organization, the We Are Guåhan coalition, recently collected over 10,000 signatures to petition President Obama to step off the base and hear the concerns of the local people when he visits there in June. We have not been



able to say yes or no to this (buildup)," says Jon Blas, resident of Guam and member of We Are Guåhan. "Hawaii said no. California said no. But we were never given the opportunity. It's not fair, especially because it is looking like this is going to hurt us more than help us." We Are Guåhan's growing membership felt that a strong message must be sent to Washington DC. The petition states: "The military buildup will permanently change our island and our lives. The needs of all Guam's people must come first, for this island is our home. It is critical that President Obama hear our concerns."

The Storm of US Militarization *UN Testimony*

As I speak, the indigenous people of the longest colonized island in the Pacific Ocean, the Chamorus of Guam, brace our selves against a storm of military buildup so volatile in nature and so irreversible in consequence. With no input from the Chamoru people and over our deepening dissent, the US will flood its modern colony with 80,000 people as part of its realignment plans. This number includes the 8,000 US Ma-



rines and their 9,000 dependents being ousted by outraged folks in Okinawa. Joining the 60,000 US military personnel and their dependents is an outside labor force estimated upwards of 20,000 workers on construction contracts. The Navy recently suggested that six more nuclear submarines will be added to the three already stationed in Guam.

In order for this to take place, the proposal is to dredge 71 acres of precious coral reef in our only natural harbor. There is talk of a sixth aircraft carrier and a monstrous Global Strike Force soon to be developed. Deputy Commander of the US Pacific Command Daniel Leaf informed us of other programs in the works to establish a strike and intelligence surveillance reconnaissance hub at Andersen Air Force Base for an Army air missile defense system. Though this expansionism is exaggerated, it only complements the impressive Air Force and Navy show of force on 1/3 of our island already. This influx will have devastating consequences on the Chamorus of Guam, who make up only 37% of the 178,000 people living in Guam and who already suffer the signature maladies of a colonial condition. It threatens to put out the fire of our half century struggle to attain some true measure of self-government, the fire of which was entrusted by United Nations to the US as guardians.

With the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Study of Guam and the Mariana Islands, the Department of Defense has revealed in its' 11,000 page document (normal DEIS documents are 100-300 pages) the true plans that bode negative and devastating effects to the island, the culture and the people of Guam. Of the 10.3 billion dollars settled upon by the US and Japan, nothing definite has been stated as to how this money will be used to improve our flailing infrastructure. All indications are that Guam is expected to foot the bill of this re-occupation. Meanwhile, virtually every public sector is being threatened with privatization. Meetings with defense officials have proved empty, as every military officer we have met with informs us of their inability to commit to anything. In effect, they repeat that they have no working plans to spend money on civilian projects, as dollars tied to this transfer have been allocated to development only within the bases. Two multimillion-dollar contracts have been pre-awarded to two American-based companies; one

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from California, one Virginia. Money for education in the territory will again be allocated to schools for children of US military personnel and not ours. Meanwhile, public education in Guam is under biweekly duress; local teachers have been continually threatened with payless paydays. The burden on the Guam Public School System has been worsened by the US' failure to justly compensate Guam for shouldering the costs of its compacts of free association with Micronesian states, which strain our limited resources.



There is talk of US plans to condemn more of our land to accommodate its accelerated military needs, which would add to its occupation of 1/3 of our island already. In contrast, there is no talk of plans to clean up radioactive contaminations of Guam from toxins leftover from its World War II activities and its intense nuclear bombing campaign of the Marshall Islands only 1200 miles from Guam. No word either on whether or not it plans to pay war reparations due to us since it forgave Japan of its crimes of World War II. Bills seeking compensation for both our exposure to radioactive material and our endurance of Japanese concentration camps from World War II await congressional action. Our elders continue dying while they wait. It's not terribly surprising. What is happening now - this vulgar re-occupation - is happening without our consent. Like an awful re-run of WWII, when the US unilaterally forgave Japan its horrific war crimes on our people, the US is at the table again with Japan, negotiating away our right to self-determination.



But beyond the B-2s in our skies, the ships playing war games in our waters, the increased amount of weapons of mass destruction stored in Guam, and contaminations that continue causing our people to suffer extraordinarily high rates of every kind of radioactivity related cancer, there is a growing desperation back home. A desperate lethargy is in the wind. A realization that if the UN remains unable to slow the manic speed of US militarization, Chamorus as a people will pass.

Only last year we were reporting to the UN of two very frightening facts: 1) it was recently discovered that the US Department of Interior purposefully killed a presidential directive handed down in 1975, ordering that Guam be given a commonwealth status no less favorable than the one the US was negotiating with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands at that time; and 2) a campaign of the Guam Chamber of Commerce (primarily consisting of US statesiders) to privatize every one of Guam's public resources (i.e. the island's only water provider, only power provider, only local telephone provider, public schools, and its only port, on an island that imports 85-90% of its food and where private monopolies of public goods would truly make the island captive to the forces of the market) is undermining our indigenous civilization with violent speed.

The people of Guam are not unified around this military buildup despite dominant media representations. For all intents and purposes, there is no free press in Guam. Local media only makes noise of the re-



occupation, not sense of it. The Pacific Daily News - the American subsidiary newspaper that dominates the discourse has been particularly effective at cutting off oxygen to civil society. Rather than debating this military buildup's enormous sociopolitical, environmental and cultural consequences, it has framed the conversation around how best to ask the US (politely) for de facto consideration of our concerns, without appearing un-American. In its endless genuflection toward corporate America it has privileged potential short-term economic stimulus and forsaken every other sociological concern. Dismissed the dream of a decolonized Guam and the people courageous and loving enough to build it. We tell the world to heed this deepening of opposition, uncertainty, and insecurity around this buildup. The US has provided no answers. We need help to turn the world's eye to Guam, so that, at the very least, our sisters and brothers can see us before we are ghosts.

The last few weeks on the UN General Assembly floor have tested our insides. Diplomats from all over have come addressing your body, many rightfully outraged at the imperial appetite of the US and how badly it starves human hearts of hope. We are here to echo this simple truth: the aggressive



militarization of our world is laying humanity a premature grave. And we find that unacceptable.

We urge this body of the United Nations to pass a resolution condemning this massive military transfer and buildup of Guam as a grave breach of duty on the part of the Administering Power,

in no less explicit terms. But we come for another reason apart from our rage. As an indigenous people, we offer prayer. That you keep your moral courage close. That you continue to believe that what we are doing here, these words, are the better way . Even when cynicism is winning the day. Even, and especially, when words have lost so devastatingly much of their meaning.



ONLINE

BLOGS

Famoksaian West Coast - <http://famoksaianwc.wordpress.com/>
Guma' Famoksaian - <http://famoksaian.blogspot.com>
Decolonize Guam – <http://decolonizeguam.blogspot.com>
No Rest For The Awake – <http://minagahet.blogspot.com>
Drowning Mermaid - <http://thedrowningmermaid.blogspot.com>
The Insular Empire - <http://theinsularempire.blogspot.com>
DMZ Hawai'i - <http://www.dmzhawaii.org>
Ten Thousand Things - <http://tentousandthingsfromkyoto.blogspot.com>
Chamorro.com – <http://www.chamorro.com>
Guampedia - <http://guampedia.com/>
Guamology - <http://www.guamology.com/>

PRINT MEDIA

The Washington Post - <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/03/21/AR2010032101025.html>
The Nation - <http://www.thenation.com/doc/20100503/paik>
Marianas Variety – <http://www.mvariety.com>
Pacific Daily News – <http://www.guampdn.com>
Stars & Stripes – <http://www.pstrips.com>
The Saipan Tribune – <http://www.saipantribune.com>

SUGGESTED READINGS

Just Left of the Setting Sun 2006
The Fire This Time: *Essays on Life Under Occupation* 2006
What We Bury At Night: *Disposable Humanity* 2008
Julian Aguon
Blue Ocean Press

Remaking Micronesia : *Discourses Over Development in a Pacific Territory, 1944-1982*
David Hanlon
University of Hawai'i Press. 1998

Colonial Dis-Ease: *U.S. Navy Health Policies and the Chamorros of Guam , 1898-1941*
Anne Perez Hattori
University of Hawai'i Press. 2004

Destiny's Landfall: *A History of Guam*
Robert F. Rogers
University of Hawai'i Press. 1995

The Secret Guam Study: *How President Ford's 1975 Approval of Commonwealth Was Blocked by Federal Officials*
Howard P. Willens & Dirk A. Ballendorf
Micronesian Area Research Center & N.M.I Division of Historic Preservation. 2004



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Guam Sign on Letter – Halt the Guam Build up plans, Rewrite the DEIS:
<http://www.tinyurl.com/guambuildup>

Write your Congressional or Diet representative:

**Let them know you do not support your taxes paying for this
excessive and obscene expenditure of military aggression.
The people of the world do not want to continue paying for war!
Do not vote for any war funding!!!!**

The people of Guåhan are in need of legal and environmental experts in anticipation of litigation of the approval of the DEIS and further implementation of the largest military buildup in the WORLD taking place on our islands. CONTACT: www.weareguahan.com

BROADCAST MEDIA

Democracy Now – http://www.democracynow.org/2009/10/9/guam_residents_organize_against_us_plans
Now on PBS - <http://www.pbs.org/now/shows/550/index.html>
KPFA.FM – <http://www.minagahetzone.com/famoksaiangiirediu>
KPRG FM 93.1— <http://www.kprgfm.com/main/index.php>
KPRG FM 93.1 Beyond the Fence - <http://kprg.podbean.com/>
WBAI - http://www.asiapacificforum.org/show-detail.php?show_id=165
Pacific News Center - <http://www.pacificnewscenter.com/>
i94-FM - <http://www.kuam.com/Global/story.asp?S=11095346>
Isla63-AM - <http://www.kuam.com/Global/story.asp?S=11095354>
KUAM – <http://kuam.com>
KGTF-TV 12 – <http://www.kgtf.org>



ORGANIZATIONS

We Are Guahan— <http://www.weareguahan.com>
We Are Guahan Public Forum Facebook
Famoksaian— <http://famoksaian.blogspot.com/>
Famoksaian Facebook



Inform Yourself

We Are Guahan: Grey Papers
<http://www.weareguahan.com>

▼
**Draft Environmental Impact Study
Guam & CNMI Military Relocation**
<http://www.guambuildupeis.us/>

▼
**Center for Biological Diversity
Response to DEIS**
<http://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/center/articles/2010/los-angeles-times-02-24-2010.html>

▼
EPA Response to Guam DEIS
<http://www.stripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=68298>



CONDEMNS THE U.S. MILITARY BUILDUP OF GUAM AND CALLS UPON PEACE & JUSTICE ACTIVISTS EVERYWHERE FOR SOLIDARITY

The proposed hyper-militarization of Guam, an American colony in the Pacific Ocean, bodes great harm for the people & environment of this 212 square-mile island. The military buildup of Guam includes, among other devastating proposals:

- Construction of facilities & infrastructure to support the full spectrum of warfare training for some 8,000 US Marines (& their dependents) being relocated from Okinawa to Guam.
- Construction of a deep-draft wharf in Guam's only harbor to provide for nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, destroying 70 acres of healthy & endangered coral reef.
- Construction of an Army Missile Defense Task Force modeled on the Marshall Islands-based Ronald Regan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site, for the practice by US military personnel of intercepting intercontinental ballistic missiles.
- Forcible land-grabbing of an additional 2,200 acres of indigenous Chamoru land.
- Desecration of Pāgat, one of Guam's oldest ancient villages dating back to 2,000 BC.
- Dangerous over-tapping of Guam's water system to include the drilling of 22 additional wells.
- Denial of the most fundamental human right of the Chamoru people of Guam to self-determination.



COALITION MEMBERS

Conscious Living 🇬🇺 Famoksaiyan West Coast- 🇬🇺 Guåhan Indigenous Collective
The National Association of Social Workers, Guam Chapter 🇬🇺 The Guam Alternative Lifestyle Association
I Nasion Chamoru 🇬🇺 The Cultural Arts Program 🇬🇺 MEMBER OF: International Network of Women Against Militarism

Learn more at www.weareguahan.com or email lisanati@yahoo.com