We are living in a world on fire. In every region of the world, there is a country facing U.S.-backed war, occupation, military aggression or sanctions.

The Middle East and Africa have been the main focus of this war drive. Afghanistan’s 17 years of war and occupations began in 2001, and the invasion of Iraq in 2003 extended to an ongoing war and occupation continuing today. The brutal NATO bombing of Libya in 2011 has left the country which formerly had the highest lived standard in Africa in complete shambles. Today Syria is devastated by the U.S. first arming and training mercenaries to wreak havoc in the country, and now U.S. and Israeli airstrikes and military action. There is, of course, Palestine, which has been under Zionist Israeli occupation since 1948 with U.S., Canada and EU support.

From the Middle East to Africa, Europe to Asia to Latin America, we are living in a new era of war and occupation. This immense and far-reaching imperialist military machine needs infrastructure to work, which would not be possible without a global network of foreign military bases. According to the U.S. Department of Defense website, the U.S. military operates in more than 360 countries, on all seven continents, with approximately 4,800 defense sites. An estimated 800 to 1000 of these bases are foreign bases, with approximately 450,000 soldiers stationed overseas according to Business Insider. These bases are not only springboards from which to carry out military actions. U.S. foreign military bases are also denying the self-determination of many oppressed nations, whose people have protested against these bases and have often been displaced and threatened by the presence of the U.S. military on their lands. As countries struggle to assert their own independent foreign policies, they face the global bully of the U.S. having the last word and dictating their decisions in favour of U.S. imperialist interests. No wonder executive military power of all imperialists is having the last word and dictating their decisions in every region of the world.

For the local Okinawan population, first and foremost their self-determination right over their lands are violated by the constant, ongoing presence and occupation of the U.S. military. Then there is the effect of the U.S. military on their safety and well-being. According to a June 2018 Japan Times article, since 2011 over 900 crimes committed by U.S. military personnel and civilian employees have been reported in Okinawa. About 10% of these cases were serious crimes such as murder, robbery or rape. According to 2017 data published by the Japanese Committee for Peace, 16.9% of breaches of the criminal code committed by American military personnel the previous year were brought to court.

Records show that the U.S. government doesn’t spend $100 billion a year operating foreign military bases without reason. As said at the beginning of this article, foreign military bases are part of the current U.S. imperialist war drive. Okinawa is in the South China Sea, a region of vital importance for future U.S. containment of growing military power of China and as well as maneuvering and military aggression against China and Russia. U.S. bases in Okinawa are also part of the U.S. strategy against North Korea, as well as to assert U.S. dominance in the whole Asia Pacific region.

For over 70 years the Okinawan people have opposed and protested the U.S. military presence on their land, with protests, legal challenges, and elected Okinawan officials, especially their governors, exerting the limited powers they have against the U.S. military occupation. The protest movement is alive and well today – on August 11, 2018, over 70,000 protesters rallied, despite pouring rain and an approaching typhoon, in protest to the construction of the new base in Henoko. On February 24, 2019, a referendum was held in Okinawa Prefecture which asked voters to approve or oppose the landfill work at Henoko. According to 2017 data, 72% of voters at the new base in Henoko.

Stop the war! stop the occupations!
By Azza Rejji and Mike Larson

At a time when Venezuela is under increasing pressure following the incorporation of imperial U.S. military forces as joint peacekeepers along with other imperial forces, and the Bolivarian revolutionary government is facing a brutal economic sanctions and an aggressive military intervention from the United States and its lackeys, there is a growing sense of urgency among the people of Venezuela to take action against these foreign military bases. From Okinawa to Shannon, to those 1000 foreign bases around the world, let’s bring an end to the U.S. and NATO military use of Shannon, against U.S./NATO Military Bases was held in Shannon in July 2014. Two Irish legislators had organized a program for us to give a sense of pride in their education. Not all the students who participated in the movement are young people actively organizing and influencing educational policies and their curriculum. At a time when Venezuela is under increasing pressure, and the Bolivarian revolution is facing a brutal economic sanctions and an aggressive military intervention from the United States and its lackeys, it is of vital importance to bring these organizations together. The International Peoples Assembly that included a letter of solidarity with the international people’s movements for Social Justice and to use this experience to combat the lies and pressure and imperialist aggression. The assembly was attended by a wide variety of plenaries about the international peoples movements and organizations. During the assembly, representatives from the Bolivarian revolution and social movements spoke at a plenary of plenaries about the importance of defending the Bolivarian revolution and the concrete tasks needed to confront imperialism when we return to each of our countries. On February 28, 2012, the Vice President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Deisy Rodriguez, gave a powerful speech on the topic of the imperialist war against Venezuela - as imperialist governments and their allies are trying to destroy the Bolivarian revolution they are trying to destroy the life of people. We also felt the pride and strong commitment of the Venezuelan people in defending their revolution. The International Peoples Assembly Following the successful Che Guevara International Youth Brigade, social movements and organizations gathered in Caracas for the program of the International Peoples Assembly. The assembly took place from February 24-28 and brought together 500 participants from 90 countries and continents and linking 151 peoples movements and organizations. International Solidarity Forever

Viva Venezuela! Viva Revolution!
The International Peoples Assembly closed with a final goal set to create the International Peoples Assembly that included a letter of solidarity with Venezuela, and a political declaration from the Che Guevara International Youth Brigade in Caracas by two representatives from the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice and EcuRed from the Socialist Youth League of Zambia. For all of us that participated, the Brigade and the International Peoples Assembly were very educational and inspiring experiences. As we each lead back to our respective countries, we are committed to continue the work we began with our already existing network of partners. The program included rallies, pickets, petition drives, banner drops, forums, conferences, festivals and cultural events to educate the public about imperialist war against Venezuela.