



2017 Independent and Peaceful Australia Network Conference

Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN), representing over 60 peace, anti-war, community organisations and unions around Australia held its 4th national conference in Melbourne on 9/10 September 2017.

This IPAN National conference is taking place on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people. We acknowledge this country was violently seized from the First People 230 years ago. We pay our respects to their long struggle for justice and self-determination. We affirm that true independence cannot be achieved without a just and sovereign Treaty with the Indigenous people of this land.

We have a vision of an Australia that plays a positive and independent role in building peace in our region and beyond through peaceful resolution of international conflicts.

This national conference reaffirms that Australia urgently needs an independent and peaceful foreign policy that upholds Australia's independence and ends successive Australian governments' subservience to U.S. or any other big powers' agendas. We seek an independent foreign policy that respects the sovereignty and self-determination of all countries.

We believe the integration of Australia's military facilities, defence forces and our foreign policies into U.S. military agendas threaten our sovereignty and security and contributes to global wars.

We believe that the continuing operations of U.S. military bases in Australia, the joint military exercises in North Queensland and the stationing of US marines in Darwin are a threat to the security, safety and sovereignty of the Australian people and integral to U.S. global wars.

We believe Australia can be self-reliant in its ability to safeguard our security and sovereignty. The Australian people have the skills, knowledge and creativity to design and build our own self-defence industries and strategies, and do not need to depend on any big powers.

We uphold the Australian people's aspirations for global peace and security and call for an end to escalating militarisation of the world. We stand in solidarity with the people of Korea, the Philippines, Japan, Guam, and many other countries in Europe and Latin America campaigning against wars of aggression, foreign military bases and troops, and for peace, justice and sovereignty.

In moving towards an independent and peaceful Australian foreign policy:

- We call on the Australian government and the Opposition to end their unequivocal subservience to U.S. military and foreign policies that have made Australia a virtual rubber stamp, helping to legitimise U.S. foreign policies, military adventures and threats to peace. For example, Australia refusing to ratify the U.N. Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty; continued support for Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the blockade on Gaza, and voting with the U.S. and U.K. against calls in the U.N. for decolonising Diego Garcia U.S. military base and allowing the Indigenous people return to their homeland.

- We call on the government to immediately end Australia's military engagements in U.S.- led wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan.
- We call on the Australian government to immediately sign the U.N. Nuclear Weapons Bans Treaty.
- We call for removing U.S. marines and warplanes from Darwin back to the U.S.
- We call for an immediate end to any contribution from the U.S. military intelligence base Pine Gap near Alice Springs to the drone assassination program. Furthermore, we are deeply concerned that US military bases on our soil, including Pine Gap, integrate Australia into the US war machine and lock us into its wars against countries with whom we're not at war, and jeopardise Australia pursuing friendly and peaceful relations with our neighbours and the international community. These bases deny Australia our sovereignty and our freedom to make foreign policy decisions independently of the US. We support the call made by the former Prime Minister, the late Malcolm Fraser, to phase out U.S. military bases on Australian soil.
- We call on the government to re-direct public funds from supporting U.S. wars and the military-industrial complex into public and community needs such as health, education, income security for all, affordable housing, creating sustainable and socially useful local industries and jobs; and addressing climate change.
- We call for the removal of Lockheed Martin and other military corporations from Australian Universities and schools. We oppose the inroads made into the militarisation of education, manufacturing industries and the economy by military corporate conglomerates like Lockheed Martin, Raytheon and others.
- We call for the ending of military tensions in the South China Sea by the removal of the military presence of countries not directly involved in the disputed territories. Australia should not be used to provoke a conflict by sending our navy or airforce into the disputed areas.

This Conference welcomes the trade unions' involvement in the broad people's movement for peace and independence. Australian unions have always been at the forefront of campaigns for peace and against wars of aggression.

We support the aspirations of people of Korea to remove U.S. troops, bases and the THAAD system from the Peninsula. This would enable the people of Korea to work on a peaceful resolution in their own country.

This Conference calls for building and mobilising a broad united people's movement against wars of aggression and nuclear weapons; for peace and an independent Australian foreign policy.

September 10, 2017, Melbourne.