

KC AFSC Peace and Justice Alert – September 13, 2013

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*“The past is prophetic in that it asserts loudly
that wars are poor chisels
for carving out
peaceful tomorrows.”
~Martin Luther King, Jr.*



Over 70 people gathered to say not to military action in Syria on September 5 at 47th and Main, KCMO. The event generated news coverage on TV channels 41 and 9 and others.

Dear Peacemakers,

Thanks to all who attended the No U.S. Military Intervention in Syria Demonstration on September 5th. It was a spirited event with all four local TV news crews present. Many also went from the demonstration to Cong. Cleaver's Town Hall meeting. The Congressman did a great job of listening but needs to be reminded that we have diplomatic choices. An email Cleaver's office sent out last week included a survey offering a choice of several levels of military action; sending of humanitarian aid; preventing any U.S. aid or intervention; or taking no action and turning it over to the U.N. The lack of

options for the U.S. to pursue diplomacy, support of the U.N. and International Criminal Court, an arms embargo to all sides was unexpected coming from our progressive representative.

The surprisingly the Russia's taking up what may or may not have been an off handed comment by Sec of State John Kerry is proof that calling for vigorous diplomatic action is not just empty words but has great power and truly the way to peace.

Much is needed to address the tragic reality of Syria. Progress is being made regarding the use of chemical weapons but much more needs to be done to end the violence and deaths of the Syrian people. These include: diplomacy, a cease fire, arms embargo, peace conference and more. [See below](#) for actions you can take, a recent statement by AFSC's national secretary and more.

Thank you for your commitment to peace and all of the actions you take.

Sincerely,



Ira Harritt
KC Program Coordinator
American Friends Service Committee
816 931-5256, iharritt@afsc.org

P.S. We're excited about beginning a new year of work with our Youth Civic Engagement Project. Interns made their first If I Had a Trillion Dollars youth film workshop with a school group last week. Contact us if you or a teacher or youth leader working with high school-aged youth you know might be interested.

Youth Civic Engagement Project

Using the arts to engage youth about issues that impact them and our community.



The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) invites high school-aged youth programs and school groups to participate in creative projects, using the arts to engage youth on issues of economic justice, war, peace, and hope for the future.

AFSC Peace Interns will work with high school-aged youth through our youth civic engagement program, during the 2013-14 school year. After learning about peace and justice issues, youth will be engaged in video and spoken word projects enabling them to express their ideas, feelings and hopes for the future.

Participation in the national AFSC **youth film festival, "If I had a Trillion Dollars" (IHTD)** is first opportunity we provide. The IHTD project teaches youth about U.S. federal spending and budget priorities and how they impact our community. Youth will then be guided in creating 3-minute videos about their priorities for our tax dollars and how to submit the film to the festival. After the completion of videos youth will be invited to a Kansas City IHTD screening event and to a national screening and lobbying event in Washington, D.C.

A second opportunity is the **"If I Could Change the World" Spoken Word Project** organized with The Writers Place. The Spoken Word Project will engage youth in envisioning the world in which they would like to live and in creating spoken word pieces to communicate their visions. Following classroom and youth program sessions, youth are invited to attend a workshop to refine and develop their writing. Youth who wish can then participate in performances in traditional and non-traditional venues.

In each project AFSC interns and community volunteers will meet with youth groups and school classes and guide them through the activities. The IHTD project will take place from September through December 2013. Video submission deadline for the national film festival is January 11, 2014. The "If I Could Change the World..." spoken word project will begin in January 2014 and end with performances in area venues in March through June 2014.



*"This is a time for bold measures. This is the country, and you are the generation."
~ Bono*

Interested Kansas City area school and youth groups can contact AFSC to find out how their class or group can participate at 816 931-5256, or afsckc@afsc.org. For information go to www.afsc.org/kansascity



**American Friends
Service Committee**

Upcoming Peace and Justice Activities

Click on link or scroll down for more information about the peace and justice activity

September 14, Saturday, 10:30am-9:00pm, Anti-Klan / Anti-Hate Demon in Raytown. An anonymous racist has been posting call-outs to neonazis, klan, ccc, neoconfederates, etc, requesting that they gather at a confederate remembrance event in the Kansas City area.

September 21, Saturday, 10am to 6 pm and Sunday, 22, noon-5 pm, PeaceWorks' Annual UNplaza Art Fair, a big splurge with local artists, affordable art, children's craft area--fun for us and funds for peace. All Souls Church, 4501 Walnut, KCMO More at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1403992163156206/>.

September 25th, Wednesday, 6:00-7:30pm, KC Banned Books Week Event. Join the ACLU to celebrate Banned Books Week at Prospero's Uptown Books, 3600 Broadway, #107, KCMO

September 16, Monday, 10- 11am Central Time, Introduction to Social and Political Empowerment Webinar. Jamila Raqib, Executive Director of the [Albert Einstein Institution](#), will introduce the technique of nonviolent action and its role in preserving and extending democratic practices and human rights. By incorporating historical examples with theoretical analyses, we will discuss political power and its sources, the operation of nonviolent struggle, and the ways in which the technique contributes to social and political empowerment. [Click here to register for this free webinar!](#)

October 7, Monday, 1:30pm, Court Support: Twenty-four resisters crossed the property line at KC's new nuclear weapons parts plant on July and 3 hearings are scheduled. You can do "court support." Come listen to our proceedings, all at Municipal Court, 1101 Locust,

October 18–20: 20th Annual Peace Colloquy at Community of Christ Temple, 201 S. River Blvd., Independence, MO 64050. Programming for ages 5 and up at this "Peace, Justice, and Song" weekend will create experiences of the transformational power of song as it gives witness, proclaims the gospel, promotes peace with justice, and inspires us to act. Highlights include a kick-off hymn festival, more than 20 inspiring workshops, and a complimentary hymnal. See rates for children, youth, college students, and adults, and register online at www.CofChrist.org/peacecolloquy.

1st and 3rd Saturdays, 1:00pm, Bradley Manning Support Rally, Join us outside the gates of Ft. Leavenworth, in support of Bradley Manning through his court martial trial in February.

EVERY Tuesday, JOIN THIS Peace Demonstration between 5PM - 6 PM in the median strip on the south corner of the intersection at 63rd & Ward Parkway, Kansas City, Mo. For more information email '63rd Street Patriots' at schwartzkatz@sbcglobal.net

Weekly Wednesday, Noon, Jericho Walk for Immigrant Rights gather outside **KansasCity Immigration Court**, 2345 Grand Blvd., KCMO Info at <http://www.ijamkc.org/>

News and Alerts

A new red line for Syria won't solve the problem

The news from Washington is encouraging: There are multilateral diplomatic efforts at play to resolve the Syrian chemical weapons crisis, and President Obama and Congress are heeding our calls to participate. Diplomacy, our experience has shown, is the only way to end wars and violence.

Media reports and polling make it clear that the majority of the U.S. public is against military intervention in Syria, and that members of Congress have been listening carefully to their constituents.

We need to keep the pressure on.

Congress needs to hear that we support these diplomatic measures, but even if the current diplomatic initiative on the table falls through, the U.S. must press on diplomatically. There is no military solution to this crisis.

Join AFSC and our national allies in renewing our clear opposition to any authorization of force in Syria by using this toll free number to call Congress:

1-855-686-6927

Tell them:

“I oppose any U.S. military action in Syria and any authorization of force—even if the current attempts at diplomacy do not work.”

Instead, I support:

- *An arms embargo to all parties to the conflict*
- *Vigorous diplomatic efforts for an inclusive political solution*
- *Increased commitment to addressing the appalling humanitarian crisis*
- *Full support for a process to secure international oversight of all chemical weapons in Syria*

These inclusive steps—not more violence—are what’s needed to stem the bloodshed and begin to bring an end to this brutal war.

Your actions really can make a difference today. Help us stop the next war.

Wage peace,

Mary Zerkel and Peter Lems
AFSC Wage Peace Campaign

Action steps around Syria that are still active.

A New Red Line Won’t Stop the Violence (Wednesday 11 September)
<http://tinyurl.com/nody95d>

Open letter to elected officials (Wednesday 4 September)
<http://tinyurl.com/mfybrrh>

Tell Congress you oppose military action in Syria. (Tuesday 3 September)
<http://tinyurl.com/or7oatv>

Resources:

AFSC Syria Page
<http://afsc.org/resource/no-military-strikes-syria>

AFSC Wage Peace Facebook Page
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/AFSC-Wage-Peace-Campaign/199188769924>

Open letter to U.S. leaders

[**The world still says no to war**](#)

Demonstrators in Des Moines call for the U.S. to pursue a diplomatic means to ending the violence in Syria.

Photo: Michael Gillespie , Copyright: AFSC

[AFSC experience shows that Syrian peace won't come from further military action](#)

On Sept. 4, the American Friends Service Committee's general secretary, Shan Cretin, sent the following letters to President Obama and Congressional representatives, urging them to revitalize the search for a political settlement to the conflict in Syria instead of adding to the violence with military strikes.

Please use these letters to reach out to your own Congressional delegation this week. If you make an in-person visit, print off copies to take with you, and use the letter as a conversation-starter with staff.

As many members of Congress will be deciding where they stand in the next few days, it's important that they hear your views.

- [Look up your members of Congress](#)

Related Documents:

[Open letter to President Obama](#)

[Open letter to U.S. Senate](#)

[Open letter to U.S. House of Representatives](#)

We need your support to keep our life affirming peacemaking work alive.

Contribute. Volunteer. Spread the word!

Contact us and mail your tax deductible contribution to:

American Friends Service Committee

4405 Gillham Rd., KCMO 64110

(816) 931-5256

The information and events described in AFSC Peace and Justice Alerts are intended to educate and assist members of our community in becoming active in working for a more just and peaceful world. Inclusion of a

listing does not necessarily imply that AFSC KC agrees with all points of view that will be represented at the event.

*The American Friends Service Committee is a Quaker organization that includes people of various faiths who are committed to social justice, peace, and humanitarian service.
Its work is based on the Quaker belief in the worth of every person and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice*

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