

Press Release

On the event “Iraq War Protests + 20 – Lessons from past peace movements. Actions towards a peaceful future”

01 February 2023

Twenty years ago, on February 15th, 2003, activists from across the globe gathered in what many social movement researchers would come to describe as “the largest protest event in human history.”¹ In more than 600 cities worldwide, coordinated protests filled the streets with people expressing their opposition to the imminent United States-led invasion of the Republic of Iraq². This was part of a series of protests and political events that had begun in 2002 and continued as the invasion, the war, and the occupation took place.

Twenty years later, on February 15th and 16th, 2023, the International Peace Bureau (IPB), together with partners and supporters, has organized an event to remember and discuss the preparation, organization, and consequences of these large anti-war rallies. We aim to highlight the lessons learned by the international and national peace movements and discuss further steps toward the future of peace when dealing with the current challenges of our times.

Named “Iraq War Protests +20”, the event will have three interconnected parts – parts 01 and 02 on February 15th (04:00 PM – 08:00 PM Central European Time) and part 03 on February 16th (07:00 AM – 09:00 AM CET), with the aim to address all parts of the world.

At the event we will have the participation of a variety of speakers in round tables, interviews, and other actions in different sections:

- **Part 01: A glance at the past – the causes and consequences of the Iraq War**
 - Video opening with footage of the documentary “We Are Many” (2014)³, directed by Amir Amirani (Iran);
 - Video remarks from the organizers and participators of the activities in 2003 – names include Leslie Cagan (U.S.), Jordi Calvo (Spain), Arielle Denis (France), Willi van Ooyen (Germany), Kate Hudson (U.K.), Raffaella Bollini (Italy), Winnifred Louis & Annette Brownlie (Australia), Judy Ann Miranda (Philippines), Chris Nineham (U.K.);
 - Interview with Ismaeel Dawood (Iraq) an Iraqi Human rights defender, who will share his experience and perspectives of the Iraq War. The interview will be conducted by Kathy Kelly (U.S.);
 - First Round Table, touching on the Impact of the war on anti-war movement – Moderated by Leslie Cagan (U.S.), this section will have names such as Barbara Lee (U.S.), Jeremy Corbyn (U.K.), Anu Chenoy (India) and Reiner Braun (Germany)

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¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/15_February_2003_anti-war_protests

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2003_invasion_of_Iraq

³ <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1929449/>

- **Part 02: A glance at the present – the current state of the peace movement**
 - Noam Chomsky (U.S.) – Laureate Professor of Linguistics at the University of Arizona and an Institute Professor Emeritus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) – will be speaking about the history and context of the Iraq war, the lessons learned, and the war’s impact on global developments. This section will be moderated by Reiner Braun (Germany);
 - Second Round Table, touching on the current challenges the Peace Movement Faces. Moderated by Emily Rubino (U.S.), this section will include international contributions from Yanar Mohammed (Iraq), Baroness Dayon Ako-Adounvo (Ghana), Asya Maruket (Russia), Bruno Langeani (Brazil), Lindsey German (U.K.) and José Nivoi (Italy);
- **Part 03: A glance at the future – where peace will take us?**
 - Summary and Highlights of the previous day;
 - Third Round Table, touching on how to build the future of the peace movement – Moderated by Annette Brownlie (Australia), this section will include international speakers such as Cora Fabros (Philippines), Jungmin Choi (South Korea), Vince Scappatura (Australia), Michael Lujan Bevacqua (Guam);
 - Musical and Artistic Intervention;