

RECENT SPC STATEMENTS

The US has been in a continual state of crisis. Many issues bubble quietly for a while. Then something explodes which reminds us that that the forces of US imperialism and racism are alive and well, and the question is which country or particular group of people is being most affected.

Internationally the most visible crises SPC has responded to recently have bounced among Korea, Venezuela and Iran. In today's news cycle they get barely a mention, but that could change quickly. What follows are SPC's statements on Venezuela and Iran, written in May, 2019 (some details are slightly dated). A version of the Venezuela statement was printed on Syracuse.com; both statements were widely circulated on social media. Reading them together highlights the common themes. Thanks to Marianna Kaufman for shepherding them through SPC's process.

Statement on Venezuela

The Syracuse Peace Council opposes the opportunistic efforts of the US government to intervene in the domestic politics of the country of Venezuela for economic gain.

Despite the humanitarian rhetoric from Washington, it is clear that the Trump administration has been and continues to orchestrate a coup d'état in order to further its economic interests in the oil-rich nation. We condemn the heavy economic sanctions by the Trump administration in Venezuela, which a recent analysis by the Center for Economic Research has found to have cost the lives of at least 40,000 Venezuelans in the year spanning 2017-2018 alone.

While we fully acknowledge reports of corruption, and civil and human rights abuses of the Maduro government, such as aggressive and deadly anti-protest measures during the 2017 protests and of suspicious and possibly fraudulent 2018 elections, we continue to stand with the majority of Venezuelans in opposing the oppression of the Maduro government while also rejecting foreign military intervention and a US-backed coup.

We know that for over one hundred years following the Monroe Doctrine, the US has successfully overthrown governments or suppressed popular uprisings no less than 41 times in order to further its economic interests. We reject the ongoing US imperialism of Latin America, which has destabilized countries and created a severe and protracted refugee crisis. We respect the right of sovereign nations in Latin America to govern themselves without the threat of US military intervention.

We call on elected leaders to educate themselves regarding the harmful consequences of US interventionism in Latin America, to have the courage to stand apart from the corporate war elite, to support HR 1004 (introduced by Rep. Cicilline) that would prohibit US troops from intervening in Venezuela without congressional approval, and to speak out against the harmful economic sanctions.

Statement on Iran

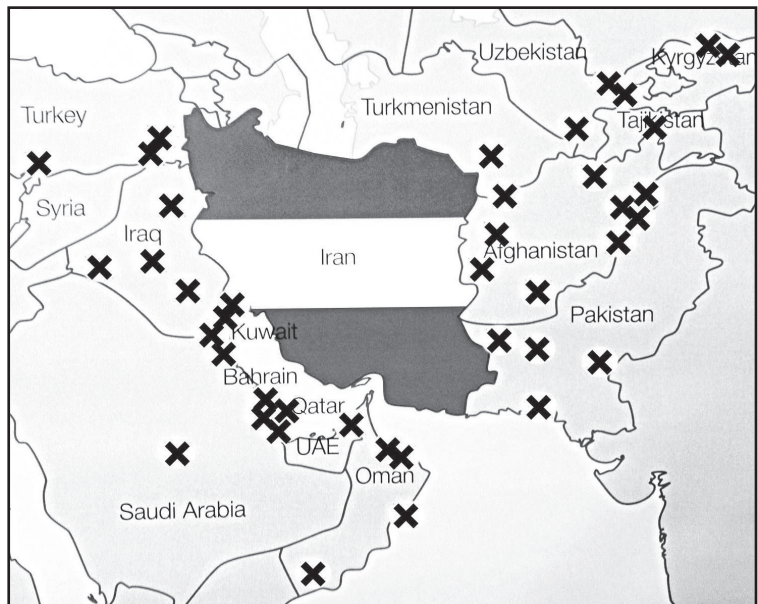
The Syracuse Peace Council condemns the escalation of tensions by the Trump administration with regard to Iran.

We have grave concern over the provocative speech and military maneuvers fostered by John Bolton in a reprise of his disastrous role prior to the United States' invasion of Iraq. On May 14, 2019 British General Ghika stated, "There's been no increased threat from Iranian backed forces", but, once again Bolton, now an influential part of the Trump administration, seeks to escalate tensions in an attempt to create justification for war.

We reject the onerous sanctions on Iran applied by the United States, despite evidence that Iran has remained in compliance with the landmark 2015 nuclear deal. We demand that the Trump administration cease the provocations, lift the debilitating sanctions affecting 80,000,000 Iranian civilians, and employ diplomacy in its relations with Iran and other countries.

We will not stand for another manufactured war in the Middle East. Such a war would subject untold numbers of Iranians to physical harm or death, and destabilize the country and region. It would cause further international tensions, waste material resources, and accelerate the climate crisis towards which the United States military is already the largest single contributor.

This cannot be allowed to happen simply to satisfy bizarre visions harbored by members of the Trump administration. We call on our members of Congress to co-sponsor The Prevention of Unconstitutional War with Iran Act of 2019, S 1039 (introduced by Sen. Udall) and HR 2354 (introduced by Rep. Eshoo). The bill explicitly denies Trump the authority to start a war with Iran without congressional approval. We call on our congressional leaders to continue to use diplomacy. ☮



This is a map of US military bases surrounding Iran. Who is actually threatening whom? Graphic: Adapted by Kanat Bolazar from maps on the web