



INTERFAITH COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR JUSTICE & PEACE
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*Religious communities must
stop blessing war and violence...*

FROM OUR PROPHETIC TRADITIONS WE CALL FOR AN END TO THE OCCUPATION OF IRAQ

THE INTERFAITH COMMUNITIES UNITED FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE (ICUJP) CAME TOGETHER AFTER THE 9/11 TRAGEDY, AND CENTERED OUR WORK IN THE DEEP CONVICTION THAT RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES MUST STOP BLESSING WAR AND VIOLENCE.

ICUJP is urgently committed to building a peace and justice movement; we believe the entire U.S. policy toward Iraq has been disastrously wrong, illegal, immoral and indecent.

The cost of U.S. imperial dominance over the Persian Gulf oil fields has been a “near apocalyptic” destruction of Iraq, the death of 1500 U.S. and other coalition troops and hundreds of thousands of Iraqi casualties.

During the ten years of U.S. led economic sanctions on Iraq, approximately 500,000 children died from malnutrition and disease. The loss suffered by Iraqis has been incalculable.

We call for the U.S. to set a deadline – no later than December 31, 2005 – to get all military personnel, including “private mercenary forces” out of Iraq, leaving no bases behind. **End The Failed Iraq Policy – End Occupation by December 31, 2005.**

We call on communities of faith and other concerned groups to create plans of action to implement this prophetic position.

- We are enslaved to a war system in the U.S., a racist system where the instruments of slaughter and death are preeminent, power is believed to make us moral, and where profits come at the expense of human needs. The Iraq war is symptomatic of the racism, imperialism and supremacy of corporate America, which continue to define America. Ending the occupation and killing in Iraq is an important step to take against the war machine, and toward a radical democracy that will truly foster justice and peace in the world.
- The occupation itself is a major cause of the violent Iraqi resistance. The grossly immoral U.S. invasion of Iraq is compounded by the continued occupation by U.S. military forces.
- Reliable polls conducted in March and April 2004 revealed that over two-thirds of the Iraqi people favored the withdrawal of U.S. troops within a year, or when an Iraqi government was in place. After the recent election it should be clear that now is the time to begin the troop withdrawal.
- Because of the overwhelming power and presence of the U.S. in the country, we must take the first initiative to get out. We should announce we will be gone by December 31, 2005. This will allow the UN, with peacekeeping forces chosen predominantly from Muslim countries, to come in and implement a thorough stabilization plan. They do not want to see Iraq fall into chaos. At the earliest appropriate time these U.N. forces should also withdraw.
- We have an immense debt to the Iraqis for destroying their country, first with sanctions and bombing and now with the ground war and occupation, and for killing so many of their people. We can calculate what extending the occupation for five more years would cost at troop levels roughly equivalent to those now in place: That total would be approximately \$500 billion. We must demand that the U.S. contribute to an internationally administered fund in that amount. We must demand these financial resources be contributed to an international – administered fund: half for infrastructure rebuilding and half for the human needs of the world’s people.
- We say no to war with all its brutality and destruction of life because we are committed to the sacredness of all life and the power of non-violent love. We must build a strong peace and justice system, so that the decisions that led to our invasion of Iraq will not lead the U.S. into future illegal, immoral and deadly invasion of other countries in the Middle East (Iran).
- We hold up reconciliation and restorative justice as a means of resolving conflict. Injustices at home and abroad are essentially of one piece, each part of the global community inextricably related to the other.
- The U.S. should also take the lead in calling for the forgiveness of all of Iraq’s foreign debt.

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