



# Documents of the

**National Conference  
All India Peace & Solidarity  
Organisation  
5-6 October 2012  
Puducherry**

## **Draft Political Resolution of the National Congress of All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO)**

The National Conference of the AIPSO recognizes that the contemporary world is passing through a very complex phase. The new millennium was being projected as a time where the world would move towards enduring peace with the end of the Cold War and that the material and human resources will be exclusively deployed for the benefit of mankind. Unfortunately, that has not happened and the world today is facing war, attempts at recolonisation, an economic crisis that has engulfed the advanced economies and a huge ecological crisis.

AIPSO is proud to inherit the mantle of Indian peoples' fight against colonial rule. It is important to understand that this fight still continues.

We recollect we pride that the Father of Indian Renaissance, Raja Rammohan Roy (1772-1830) expressed his support as early as in the 1820s for the people of Latin America fighting against the Spanish colonial rule under the inspiring leadership of Simon Bolivar.

The organized movement of various sections of the Indian people in post-First World War period in particular had begun to stand firmly in solidarity with the peoples fighting against colonial subjugation in Africa and Asia.

C R Das, one of the greatest leaders of the Indian freedom struggle, urged to form an Asian Federation in his presidential speech at the All India Congress Session in 1921. During the 1930s, the Indian National Congress, the broad platform of various trends of the national liberation struggles organized 'Abyssinia Solidarity Movement'. Indian people supported the cause of Spanish people's fight against Nazism. The Indian National Congress sent a Medical Mission to China in 1937 when the Chinese people had been fighting against Japanese aggression.

When the Second World War broke out, the people of India had organized a broad-based anti-fascist movement. The organization like Friends of the Soviet Union (FSU) played a historic role at that time.

The people of India extended their whole-hearted support for the people of Indo-China and deplored the machinations of French colonial power. A strong Vietnam Solidarity Movement was mobilized in late 1940s in various parts of the sub-continent.

The holding of the Asian Relations Conference in Delhi in March 1947 was also a significant event. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, then head of the Indian Interim government, inaugurated the conference.

The first World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace convened in Wroclaw, Poland on 6 August 1948 and made an appeal for the struggle for peace the world over to be organized. On 20 April 1949 the first World Congress of Peace Forces, convened simultaneously in Paris and Prague. A decision was taken during this Congress to found the World Peace Council, and a year later this decision was implemented in Warsaw, with the French academician and Nobel laureate Frederic Joliot Curie its first president.

WPC is guided by the words of its Founder President Frederic Joliot-Curie "Peace is Everybody's Business".

The first campaign organized by the WPC was to collect signatures worldwide on a petition demanding the abolition of atomic weapons.

The Indian people welcomed the decision to form the World Peace Council (WPC) in and took part in the activities in the WPC since its inception.

The first All India Peace Conference was held in Mumbai in May 1951. The conference set the tone and perspective for the developments that followed.

The conference gave a ringing call to safeguard and strengthen India's newly-acquired freedom which was threatened by the imperialist forces.

The delegates from all parts of India called for a united movement to carry forward the best traditions of the Indian national movement the end to war and weapons of mass destruction, active support to all peoples and countries fighting for their independence, condemnation of imperialist aggressions and conspiracies to

destabilize democratic regimes, against colonialism, against racism, against military bases and pacts, against exploitation by foreign companies and corporations, for self reliance and mutual cooperation.

The urge for freedom took on a new dimension and began swiftly to spread throughout the continent of Africa, seething under cruel domination by French, British, Belgian and Portuguese imperialism.

In 1956, the Suez Canal was brought under the jurisdiction of Egypt under President Gamal Abdel Nasser. The national liberation movements were advancing in countries like Algeria, Madagascar, Cameroon, Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea Bissau, Congo.

The Indian Committee for Asian Solidarity took the initiative to call for the holding of a conference for solidarity with the peoples of Africa and Asia. The Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), which had been originated in a conference in Cairo, in 1957. India is proud to have taken the initiative for the great movement led by the AAPSO.

AIPSO after its inception, also started to cooperate with the Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAAL) when it was founded in Havana, Cuba in January 1966 with the stated purpose of fighting imperialist globalisation, imperialism and defending human rights

Early seventies was a turning point in our movement. The organisation spread further and drew new sections. The national liberation movements in Vietnam, Angola and Mozambique, reached new heights. The NAM provided a new awakening to the people of the newly-freed countries, the attempts by the US imperialism to subvert the process of independence and threats on our sub-continent alerted our people of the dangers we faced. All this gave a new dimension to the AIPSO.

The history of AIPSO is the history of important contribution towards movement for peace, disarmament, development and solidarity with people of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The collapse of socialism in former Soviet Union and in East Europe and subsequent strengthening of imperialist hegemony made the situation difficult also for the peace movement around the globe. The World Peace Council suffered a lot. The AIPSO had to face a very difficult situation during the 1990s.

However, AIPSO has fought back the odds. It also contributed towards rejuvenating the World Peace Council as a global forum.

In 1994, a conference took place in Mexico, which was a landmark event, as the global peace forces regrouped again, and a secretariat which had disappeared was approved, made up of the national committees from Japan, France, Portugal, Palestine and Cuba. In 2000, the headquarters of the WPC was shifted to the Capital of Greece, Athens.

The last National conferences of AIPSO held in Patna (Bihar), 7-9 April 2007 was a big breakthrough in reviving our movement at the national level with broad political orientation to enable our organisation for carrying forward its long cherished legacy of mobilizing Indian people in defence of peace, independence, development, and social justice against the imperialist machinations.

Therefore, the AIPSO proudly shares the legacy of our anti-imperialist and anti-colonial freedom struggle and for the widest possible unity across the nations and the peoples of the world. The AIPSO remains steadfast in its appreciation for the objective of an independent policy direction of our country which will realize the goal of decolonization, ensure our contribution towards sustainable peace in the region and the world, and strive for enrichment of the economic and social life of our citizens and work relentlessly for solidarity and friendship with other peoples.

### **Contemporary Challenges**

However, this Conference notes that extremely serious and adverse developments have come to undermine these hopes and aspirations. With the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, it was widely felt that there is no further need for any military blocks. But today, not only does NATO continue but is acting openly as the gendarme of imperialism. The

claim that there will be no further existence of imperialism and the notion of empire itself will not be in vogue has been belied; imperialism led by the United States (US) today is inflicting severe burdens on the people of the world seriously undermining their capacity and aspiration to remain free and live in a peaceful world.

The new millennium opened up with the invasion of Iraq and the seat of the oldest human civilization remain devastated by the aggressive actions of the US and NATO forces. Similarly, the purported objective of dealing with Al Qaeda in the aftermath of the terrible attacks on the World Trade towers on 9/11 in Afghanistan has now been converted in the name of fighting terror to

Islamophobia and to an attack on the entire region. This is leading to revival of Taliban and has led to a consolidation of fundamentalist forces in the entire region including Pakistan.

The instability of the world due to these aggressive manoeuvres and campaigns by imperialism constitute a major aspect of the contemporary challenge that we face as a peace movement. The other major dimension of the challenge arises out of the global financial crisis and the continuing aftermath in the form of economic recession and slow down which affects the lives of the people all over the world.

The current approach of imperialism to secure hegemonic control over every aspect of contemporary human civilization, resources of nations, particularly the energy resources are leading to continued threats of military intervention.

The specific trajectory of market-driven economy is also leading to promotion of a pattern of consumption which is unsustainable and jeopardizing the environment and global climate.

This makes it incumbent on this Conference to realize the multi dimensional and comprehensive and interconnected nature of these challenges which threatens not only world peace but the very survival of the planet. The peace movement in India therefore needs to address these challenges and evolve an appropriate response to them.

## **The Global Financial and Economic Crisis**

A brief prognosis of the global financial crisis prompts this Conference to believe that the economic paradigm that emerged since the early mid-seventies is unsustainable.

The emergence of international finance capital and facilitating undeterred financial flows across the globe to seek short term speculative super profits led to pulling down the internal, as well as, national barriers of laws and regulations. The drive for unhindered access to markets particularly financial markets had been the principle feature of this paradigm which has come to be globally recognized as globalization.

This imperialist globalization has refashioned national policies to ensure compliance with the requirements of international finance. This had further led to the evolution of neo-liberal policies which in reality mean the redefinition of the role of Nation States. The State, in this new global dispensation, is forced to withdraw from its traditional function of providing physical infrastructure, social welfare, education and health care, and instead concentrate on promoting the unhindered interests of the market. In economy, this led to adoption of a low tax regime with commensurate reduction in subsidies for social services for the people. This has also led to large-scale privatization and handing over of the ownership and control of natural resources to private corporates.

The obvious impact of these policies for the last so many years particularly implemented with great intensity during the last two decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp is the unsustainable growth of inequality, unemployment and poverty.[1]

This has led to a direct and steep decline of the purchasing power of the people. The diminution in the purchasing power was sought to be overcome through expanding credit in which the financial institutions like bank, insurance and mortgage companies got involved and induced credit driven consumption. When this vicious circle matured, the failure to repay the original debt due to the absence of repayment capacity combined with speculative activities by the institutions trading in various debt instruments brought the whole financial system to a collapse. And, since this whole process

was globally integrated, the collapse of the financial order in US in 2007 of the housing sector threw the entire capitalist economies in a tail-spin. The financial institutions in the US had to be bailed out with trillions of dollars of public money.

This has now been worsened by the financial crisis in the European Union (EU) Greece, Portugal, and Ireland and now the relatively large economies of Spain and Italy leading to a further intensification of the global financial crisis. Major banks in Germany and France, as well as banks in UK and US are in a crisis as they are the main holders of debts of these countries. Savage wage cuts, job losses and privatisation of public infrastructure are taking place and finance capital passes the burden of this crisis on to the common people. The welfare state built by the struggles of the working class over the last 100 years is being dismantled under this new onslaught of finance capital.

The global financial meltdown and the subsequent economic recession have led to widespread adverse impact on productive economic activities and particularly employment. Though the intensity of the crisis is not as severe as it was till some time back, but the global economy has not yet recovered. Not only that, with no signs of any radical departure from this paradigm, one does not know when common citizens will come out of its aftermath.

The other serious dimension of this course of neo-liberal globalization is the way it impacts on the environment and leads to global warming and destruction of other aspects of the environment. Now it has come to be established that such destruction of the environment is leading to major changes in the climate with major adverse consequence for life and livelihood of the people, particularly the global poor.

Therefore, this Conference notes that it is incumbent on the peace movement and AIPSO to sensitize our people over this pernicious paradigm promoted by the international finance capital threatening life and livelihood of the people and the survival of our very planet. Without a struggle for a change in this ominous global policy, people's life cannot be secured and peace cannot prevail.



## **Strategic and Military Dimension**

It is obvious to this Conference that such aggressive manoeuvres and persuasion of the paradigm of neo-liberal globalization could not have been possible but for the overall military and strategic domination of imperialism. It is this overall strategic and military superiority of the imperialist camp and its drive for creating a unipolar world which had facilitated this course especially in the closing stages of the last century. This has been coupled with the need to assert physical control over energy resources and therefore military interventions.

It is this objective of securing hegemony over energy and hydro carbon resources that continue to make West Asia and North Africa the major contemporary theatre of violence and war. It is this drive for oil resources that is influencing the current reality of war and destruction that is ravaging this region.

The 9/11 attacks were used to create new enemies and justify continued military build-up and physical interventions. A new definition of freedom and democracy and humanitarian intervention was manufactured; a new military doctrine the Bush doctrine -- of 'pre-emptive' strike and 'preventive war' was introduced.

### **West Asia**

It is clear now that Iraq invasion had nothing to do with disarming the nuclear weapon capability of the Iraqi regime led by Saddam. It was aimed at securing the oil resources of Iraq and ensuring Israel's long-term dominance of the region that lay at the root of Iraq invasion. Millions of Iraqis have died; millions have become refugees with Iraq being divided into effectively three sectarian territories. Iraq still continues under occupation, so does Afghanistan.

The central question which the US-led imperialist camp find increasingly difficult to answer is their attitude on the Palestine question. Israelis are continuing with their settlements dispossessing Palestinians of their land and erecting a security network with 500 checkpoints and the 800 km long apartheid wall. This expansion by the Israeli state is actually making the possibility

of a two state solution untenable. The Arab-Israel conflict and the Palestine question continue to endanger peace. West Bank remains under occupation and people of Arab origin are denied equal rights in Israel. Gaza continues under complete isolation and military siege.

Despite the claims by the United States that they believe in an independent state of Palestine and would like to have a two-state solution, the application of the Palestinian National Authorities to be awarded a full membership of the United Nations saw the Obama administration denying the Palestinians their rightful place raising the bogey of security concerns of Israel.

The US-Israel core with support from NATO powers and the despotic Gulf monarchies are now targeting Iran and Syria to secure a complete sway over the entire region.

The excuse that US and the NATO powers advance to secure this goal is the very same one which they cited to lead the military invasion in Iraq; that Iran has nuclear weapon capability and it is moving towards producing weapons of mass destruction. Just as in the case of Iraq, no credible proof was available to substantiate these contention and the last seven years of occupation in Iraq has not even rendered an ounce of radioactive material, not to speak of actual nuclear arms; despite this, the disinformation campaign is very much afoot. Illegal sanctions have been imposed by the imperialist camp against Iran to isolate and strangle it.

Amidst the death and destruction in Afghanistan and more importantly in Iraq, the new security doctrine of US imperialism stands thoroughly exposed. At the fag end of the last century, the Bush administration embarked on its neo conservative project. The perspective document titled the 'Project for the New American Century' was formally launched. This gave official legitimacy to the notions of pre-emptive strike and regime change. And the regimes were also identified and were named 'axis of evil' and the States' concerned 'rogue'. [2]

Today, seven years after occupation of Iraq in the wake of disabling the UN Security Council not trace of arms for mass

destruction have been discovered. Once united, Iraq today remains badly polarized along Shias, Sunnis and Kurds. With 8.5 million dead and 10 million refugees, Iraq, today, is a haunted ruin. The high quality Iraqi oil is no longer a national asset. It is owned by US and British oil companies. But perhaps, the most ironical outcome is the great price that the US economy has to pay for this military campaign. Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz has shown the initial estimate of few billion dollars endorsed by the US Congress has actually turned out to be trillions. [3]

It is public knowledge that Israel has a nuclear weapon program and possesses at least 200 warheads but the US intransigence on this question in Iraq and now in Iran is completely conspicuous by its absence on the issue of Israel.

The US policies of supporting dictatorial regimes are also coming under severe question. This was evident in the outbreak of the so-called Arab Spring -- first in Tunisia and then in Egypt. Though the popular movement for democracy in these two countries have led to the ouster of the dictatorial regimes of Ben Ali in Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt; however, due to the marginalization of progressive forces, pro-Islamist groups have assumed power in these two countries.

The US and NATO used the initial democratic upsurge in Arab countries to try and manipulate its direction. They targeted first Libya to dislodge Muammar Gaddafi in Libya and now trying to use the same tactic in Syria.

With the final target for affecting a regime change in Iran, the imperialist camp in alliance with the most reactionary forces there is focussing its attention on Syria, the last surviving secular Arab nationalist regime. The opposition Syrian National Council and its military arm the Free Syrian Army is being bankrolled by the Emirates of Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The greatest joke is that these regimes are sponsoring the opposition for 'restoration of democracy' in Syria! There are fundamentalist Islamist regimes which want President Assad's government to go. There is also Turkey, which is now the main regional ally of the imperialist camp. The CIA and the Al Qaeda are fighting shoulder to shoulder for a regime change in Syria. But it is proving difficult. Firstly, the Assad regime is not as isolated as that of Gaddafi. And, having learnt their lesson from the

Libyan experience, both China and Russia have exercised their veto in the UN Security Council to stop the adoption of any pro-imperialist military intervention.

### **Unfolding of Counter-Poles**

However, the progress of the journey to install a unipolar world under the aegis of a hegemon - the sole super power of the world today-the US seems to have run into trouble. Clear signs of multipolarity are emerging. The unfolding of the serious contradiction which has led to the financial crisis and the great global recession unseen in the eight decades since the great depression of the 1930's has raised fundamental questions about the sustainability of the very model imperialist neo-liberal globalisation itself. And it goes without saying, that it was the enforcement of this paradigm which was the defining feature of the unipolar world that US imperialism was dreaming to establish and perpetuate.

Therefore, the crisis itself has given rise to many processes which challenge the vision of a unipolar world order.

First and foremost among these, is the emergence of China as a rapidly growing economy. The importance of China in the contemporary global arena can be understood from the fact that US and its European and other allies are looking to China to revive the crisis-affected global capitalism. Along with China, there are a host of other emerging economies who, though affected by the crisis are not doing as badly as North America or Europe. This was recognized by the expansion of G-8 to G-20 in taking important decisions with global significance on economic and financial questions.

The emergence of new blocks and regional platforms also underlines the changing reality which aims at challenging the unilateralism and the tendency towards a unipolar world. Important among these are the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the BRICS. The more frequent convergence of the positions of China and Russia, not just on economic issues, but also on strategic and military questions do imply roadblocks for the unipolar vision.

The changes in Latin America ,which was earlier considered as the backyard of US imperialism and had been the happy hunting ground and laboratory for some of the earliest experiments of neo-

liberalism, have also challenged the US ordained new unipolar world order. Cuba has survived the worst attacks on its sovereignty and socialism initiated by US imperialism through the obnoxious blockade. Cuba has sustained and acted as an inspiration for more widespread and thoroughgoing political changes. Mass and social movements have grown from strength to strength in the region bring about significant changes in Venezuela, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and so and so forth. A significant section of these new regimes are keen on pursuing a non neo-liberal path of development. In many instances they are nationalizing natural resources like oil and gas. And using the value locked up in these assets to provide basic services like education, health, nutrition to its people. In some cases, these regimes are also initiating agrarian reforms to break loose the extreme concentration of land ownership. Most importantly these regimes are evolving new regional structures of cooperation which severely undermine the US imperialist influence. These are in the process of consolidation and expansion from ALBA to the Community of Latin American and Caribbean nations which ensure the exclusion of US and Canada. And this process is being extended to create regional mechanisms and institutional arrangements in specific fields like Banco del Sur in Banking or Telesur in television broadcasting. Overall, the advances by the forces of anti-imperialism in the region are proving to be a great inspiration for the forces for just peace the world over and acting as an increasingly major stumbling block for the vision of a unipolar world order.

Even in the rich countries, the people are not taking the neoliberal assault on their livelihood lying down. They are out on the streets challenging these imperialism driven international finance capital sponsored policies.

Massive popular protests have swept across United States and Europe. The Occupy Wall Street movement starting with New York had spread across nearly thousand cities of the US. The significance of this huge expression of popular protest lay not only in their magnitude, but in the qualitatively new level of consciousness which was directed against the finance driven policies symbolized by Wall Street. The Occupy movement has clearly brought out that 99% suffer because of these neo-liberal policies which seem to favour only 1%. In different parts of Europe the cuts on social security, jobs and

wages referred fashionably as 'austerity' measures is galvanizing huge resistance. This has been most pronounced in Greece, Portugal, Spain, France and Great Britain. This has also led to the advance of the political forces which are opposed to the policy paradigm pursued by international finance capital. Such advances have also found electoral expressions. Obviously, the growing emergence of such forces which challenge the main thrust of imperialism's policies also act as a deterrent to unipolarity.

Therefore, all these developments which have emerged and getting increasingly reinforced in response to the pursuit of imperialist globalisation do signal the appearance of multipolar trends. To the extent that the unipolar vision of the world faces resistance, the international situation becomes conducive for the peace movement to take on imperialist aggressive for establishing its hegemony.

### **America's Pacific Century: Ramifications for the Region and South Asia**

The US administration is now talking about according a priority to Asia. The US Secretary of State Ms. Hillary Clinton explained this in November, last year. In an article in Foreign Policy.

She explained, "As the war in Iraq winds down and America begins to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan, the United States stands at a pivot point. Over the last 10 years, we have allocated immense resources to those two theatres. In the next 10 years, we need to be smart and systematic about where we invest time and energy. One of the most important tasks of American statecraft over the next decade will therefore be to lock in a substantially increased investment diplomatic, economic, strategic, and otherwise in the Asia-Pacific region."

She continues, "Harnessing Asia's growth and dynamism is central to American economic and strategic interests and a key priority for President Obama. Open markets in Asia provide the United States with unprecedented opportunities for investment, trade and access to cutting-edge technology. Our economic recovery at home will depend on exports and the ability of American firms to tap into the vast and growing consumer base of Asia".

For the US and its allies to dominate the regional security architecture it needs to 'patrol Asia's sea lanes and preserving stability' by 'defending freedom of navigation in the South China sea'. That the South China Sea is a key to US strategic interest has become increasingly clear. It is using disputes over small islands in the region for aligning with other countries in its plan of containing China. The Maritime territorial disputes in South China with overlapping claims of Vietnam, Malaysia, Philippines and Brunei, on the one hand, and China on the other is a convenient invitation to US to intervene in the choppy waters.

Another important focus for this new geo-strategy is Bay of Bengal and Indian Ocean. There is a new opening in Burma. Some disputes between Burma and Bangladesh have been resolved recently by the international commission on law of the seas. This opens up the possibility of investment in the petroleum and the natural gas sector. Bangladesh and Bay of Bengal bed also have major gas reserves.

If Ms. Clinton had barely outlined the contours of the reformulated US geo-strategic priorities, the US defence secretary Leo Panetta did not leave it to anybody's imagination. In a recently held security conference in Singapore, Panetta has clearly mentioned that the US would station 60 per cent of its naval fleet in Asia Pacific. They are looking for allies and obviously, 'subordinate allies'; because that is the very nature of empire's modus operandi. It is obvious that such re-prioritized deployment will translate into new military and naval bases in the region.

And Panetta stated clearly "In particular we will expand our military partnerships and our presence in the arc extending from Western Pacific and East Asia into the Indian Ocean region and South Asia defence cooperation; defence cooperation with India is a linchpin in this region".

Therefore, with this new priority in Asia- Pacific the implications for peace and the involvement of US imperialism are crystal clear. For example, the failure of the US Af-Pak policy has already created a major threat of terrorism in entire South Asia. It is an irony that Pakistan and particularly its armed forces that have an ignominious record of exporting terror, a long time ally of US, is now a major

victim of terrorism accentuated as a result of the US's failed Af-Pak policy.

Obviously the step up of US presence in the region will have its own ramifications for South Asia. The peace movement and the AIPSO will have to take this new reality. Given the new global landscape—whether India will subordinate its independent role in the region and the world is something that we Indians have to decide. Given our heritage and the contemporary reality which increasingly presages trends of multipolarity the choice should be simple.

### **Rights of Minorities and Dalits**

Identity politics with identity based on race, religion, caste or gender is increasingly becoming the basis for politics and political mobilization. It is well known that identity of a person can be manifold. Economic class is also an aspect of identity. But stressing the non-class categories of identity negates the concept of classes particularly those of the toiling millions. Obviously, this plays a big role in obfuscating exploitation and the need for transforming the exploitative order. But more than that, by its very nature, identity politics excludes and demarcates those of one identity from others. Wherever identity politics takes hold, it divides the people into separate and disparate groups often in conflicting and competing terms. And, to that extent, the divisive use of identity politics undermines the unity of the people against imperialism which in a way is encouraging the accentuation of such brand of identity politics. Fragmentation of identity also is harnessed by the market. This has been tried out for the first time in Yugoslavia and subsequently, in Sudan and many other countries.

This new political construct seems to be affecting our polity. This construct in the realm of politics clearly derives its philosophical inspiration from post modernism, a product of late 20<sup>th</sup> century capitalism and reverses of socialism. Post modernists argue that politics can only be 'micro' or 'local', that politics can be based only on 'differences' and 'identity'. But it does not remain confined to just opposing socialism; but it questions all the values of Enlightenment and rejects any philosophy or politics which is universal and dismisses them as 'totalising theories'. Therefore, any global opposition to capitalism is not possible under this post modernist paradigm



In fact, the conditions of the people who have been victims of imperialism particularly in the Arab world on the Palestine question, on the destruction in Iraq, Libya and now in Syria, there is a sense of desperation to fight US as the spearhead of such interventions. In many cases, it is this which is influenced by sectarian and fundamentalist ideologies. Though they aim to hurt imperialism but, in effect, they are resulting in weakening and undermining the unity of the people using sectarian identities, thereby derailing the resolve and the united struggles of the people against imperialism.

In South Asia, this is a major reality. In India as well, we are witnessing this phenomena. However, in India, the added factor is the pernicious communal ideology of the forces of Hindu communalism which creates a further sense of insecurity and persecution among the minorities. The qualitatively new feature of this ominous development of sectarian and fundamentalist politics is the increasing use of arms, violence and terror to protest the victimhood. This has meant growth in using terror as an instrument of righting the wrongs, but ends up in further providing some justification for the aggressive of imperialism and other forces of majoritarianism. Therefore, it is incumbent on the peace movement to oppose and resist terrorism in all its forms.

In India, however we are also seeing attacks on large scale attack on the rights of minorities from security establishment in the name of fighting terror. Thousands of innocent people from minority communities have been picked up and held in prisons in false cases. Under NDA and the BJP, the Home Ministry had become infiltrated by the RSS. Unfortunately, this ideology still remains within the Home Ministry and the Security establishment, accentuated by its alliances with the US and Israeli security agencies.

The recent riots in Assam and the exodus of North-east people from Bangalore and other towns in South India shows the divisive nature of identity politics and the role of right wing forces. There is little doubt that the RSS and other divisive forces are always involved in riots in India against minorities. It is also suspicious that setting the two ethnic minorities North east people and the Muslims should have taken place in Karnataka, a BJP ruled state.

The other issue that the peace movement must take up is the rights of the Dalits. It is shameful that even after 60 years of independence; Dalits are discriminated in a significant way. Manual scavenging continues, attacks on Dalits, widespread discrimination still continues. The Peace Movement must take up the rights of Dalits and Minorities in a big way as one of its major tasks of building a peaceful India.

### **Terrorism: A serious Challenge**

However, while taking account the adverse fall out of identity politics and its divisive impact because of the contemporary process imperialist globalisation, it will be naive on the part of this conference to overlook the challenge of terrorism. As, noted in the global and regional context of the middle-east the emergence of terrorism as a serious challenge has resulted from the frustration and provoked by imperialist intervention. But never the less, emergence of terrorism, fed by religious fundamentalism and other divisive ideologies, as a distinct reality has to be recognised. It is true that in a sense Imperialism and terrorism are Siamese twins, each reinforcing the other.

Terrorism has emerged as major challenge to peace, harmony and unity in South Asian neighbourhood. Given the diversity in the region, terrorism invokes real and imagined sense of persecution and use terror and violence to settle disputes. Obviously, with the encouragement to and tacit promotion of identity politics, this threat has got accentuated manifold. Therefore, this conference rededicates itself to fight terrorism of every form and hue with all the strength at our disposal.

### **Indian Economic Development**

In the first 40 years after independence, India had tried to build an independent foreign policy externally along with a mixed economy. After 1990, this is gradually being given up with a market driven approach.

It is true that the economy has grown significantly over the last 20 years. There has been a steady 8% growth, creation of a restricted but compared to the size of the global market a large base for domestic consumption and a significant growth of trade. India has

also become a major player in the services market, particularly in Business Process Outsourcing (call centres) and in software. It has also led to the development of a significant middle class with considerable purchasing power.

However, this market driven, corporate-led growth has not led to increase in employment and livelihood opportunities for the masses and has completely bypassed the agriculture sector. It has led to intensifying of the crisis for large sections of the Indian people, while the gap between the poor and the rich has grown rapidly in the last 20 years. The major gains of the current growth have been largely pocketed by the rich and the Indian elite including some actions of the middle class.

The successive Governments have pandered to big business by a large number of concessions. Foreign investments have been made easier, taxes have been reduced on the corporate sector, speculative capital entry has been made easier.

Against this, the share of wages in the net value in the industrial sector, which was 30.28 per cent in 1981-82, has declined steadily to 17.89 per cent in 1997-98 and further to 12.94 per cent in 2004-05. According to the Eleventh Plan document, wage share in the organised industrial sector is now among the lowest in the world. 77 per cent of Indian population lives on an expenditure of Rs. 20 a day. This is a picture of the growing inequality in the country.

The biggest failure of the economic policies of successive governments reflects in the current agrarian crisis. The key issue at the heart of the crisis is the financial viability of cultivation. Due to increased input prices and high volatility of prices, especially of cash crops, output price often does not cover the cost of production. The reduction of fertiliser subsidies, the closure of indigenous fertiliser plants and the resulting import of urea and potash at high prices have made farming even more unprofitable. All this has been accompanied by cuts in public investment in agriculture, deepening the agrarian crisis. The huge number of farmers' suicides is a clear indication of the crisis in Indian agriculture.

AIPSO must forge a broad unity with the people who are being excluded from the benefits of the growing economy and make clear that the current economic policies are a part of a larger imperialist

design in which finance capital is reshaping the world. The struggle of the Indian working people is not divorced from the struggle people against global capital and imperialist war in different countries.

### **Need for an Independent Policy**

The glorious anti-colonial legacy of our freedom struggle provided a firm basis for a strong anti-imperialist component in our foreign policy after we became independent. The overall international context which was adverse for imperialism provided a complementary environment. India sided with struggles of the people for decolonization, peace and disarmament. India also became one of the founders of the non-aligned movement.

However, the situation has changed substantially with the predomination of imperialist globalization and the domestic economic reorientation to pursue policies of neo-liberalisation. It is this blind pursuit of investment not just direct investment which would enhance our productive capacities and production and create employment; but also financial investment which is deployed namely with speculative purpose and for earning profits, that has come to not just undermine but also reverse many of the past foreign policy imperatives that we have followed earlier.

This is evidenced on the Palestine question. India was appreciated all over the Middle East and Arab world for its steadfast and principled support to the Palestinian cause. From Mahatma Gandhi to Pundit Nehru, India's leadership has raised their voice in support of the patently legitimate Palestinian cause; but not so any more. Today, India imports arms heavily from Israel. The arms purchase of India is so much so that we are buying even more than what Israeli armed forces buy from their arms industry. This is obviously affecting our foreign policy position vis-à-vis the Palestinian cause and our attitude towards the US-Israel axis in the Middle East.

A similar position was seen earlier on the question of invasion of Iraq and now the aggressive US moves towards Iran. India's voice against imperialist aggression is no longer heard on a world scale. On the question of Iran, India had abruptly and inexplicably changed its position in the IAEA and UN forum. Even though India is fully aware that Iran has its rights as an NPT signatory to the fuel

cycle and there is no proof that they have violated the provisions, India succumbing to US arm twisting. This was clear from the way that even though there was no UN sanction, India is reducing oil imports from Iran. The same attitude was also evident on the question of Syria.

This major shift of Indian foreign policy is a result of the reorientation of domestic economic policy making. It started in the early nineties through the minutes of the joint Indo-US dialogue which recognized a special relation with US. This was further consolidated under the NDA government with its Next Step in Strategic Partnership and the following several rounds of Jaswant Singh-Talbot talks. In between the nuclear explosions, Pokhran-II aimed with a jingoistic consideration not just escalated the tensions with Pakistan but made Indo-Pak dispute a potential area of outside intervention. With the nuclear dimension, Kashmir became internationalized.

That India's journey to forge a strategic partnership with US is bearing its fruits is for all to see. That the Indo-US nuclear deal was the pivot in cementing a wider strategic alliance including military cooperation is also amply clear from explicit statements of US Defence Secretary. And, therefore, shift of Indian foreign policy positions on important bilateral and multilateral forums should not come as a surprise.

Obviously, compromises of independent foreign policy making are costing India. In many of the disputes that India faces countries are tending to view India as the front for US strategic game plan in the region. That US strategic priority remains containment of China in the region is clear. But whether India ought to deal with our disputes with our neighbour by taking a view through the US strategic prism is the question. We must have a neighbourhood policy which must ensure peace in South Asia, the precondition for our own good. But, unfortunately, that is not happening. And, it is quite clear that US interventions in the region is counterproductive for peace. Therefore, the need for an independent foreign policy is much greater than ever before.

It is in this context that the challenges for the peace movement and AIPSO have grown manifold. And, we have to redouble our energies to ensure that India's foreign policy is independent. That is

a precondition to invigorate the struggle for peace, disarmament and development in the neighbourhood and the world.

### **Forward to Mightier Struggles: For a Better India and a Better World**

For a country like India, which suffers from such a great deal of inequality, unemployment and poverty, peace cannot mean just the absence of war. Peace has to be the ground on which we embark on a trajectory of development which brings benefit to people who cannot realize their fullest potential. Peace also cannot remain the subject of an intellectual discourse confined to the rarefied environs of seminar rooms, round tables and workshops where we discuss and debate the pros and cons, policies and statistical data relating to war and peace. Peace has to be intelligible as a necessity and a prerogative of the people; especially for those who suffer from the basic needs of a dignified human existence. Therefore, let this historic conference give out a clarion call that we will move forward towards mighty struggles with resolute action for linking the need for peace with the creation of just and equitable development that can ensure the unleashing of the creative energies of our people. We should give a clarion call to create a peaceful and better India for a just and better world.

#### **Notes**

[1] The *Human Development Report 2010* showed “a decline in labour shares in total incomes in 65 of 110 countries (roughly 60 per cent) over the past two decades, contrary to the previous assumption of stable labour shares over time. Some large countries notably India and the United States saw substantial declines, of up to 5 percentage points, from 1990 to 2008, driving a drop in the average world labour share of 2 percentage points.

“According to one study, the world Gini coefficient (the universally accepted measure of income inequalities) has worsened since 1988 and now stands at a startling 0.71 (zero representing complete equality and one at the other end of the spectrum total and complete immiserisation of the vast mass of people). Within countries rising income inequality is the norm: more countries have a higher Gini coefficient now than in the 1980s. Most countries in East Asia and the Pacific also have higher income inequality today than a few decades ago. This is explained partly by growing gaps between urban and rural areas. Poor people experience

deprivations in many other dimensions as well and at once. Of these, gender differences, amongst others remain acute.

“The worsening is especially marked in countries that were part of the former Soviet Union, which still have relatively low Gini coefficients because they started with low inequality. Transition has eroded employment guarantees and ended extensive state employment. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, 9 of 10 people in socialist countries were employed by the state, compared with 2 of 10 in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development economies.

“In sum, we estimate that about a third of the population in 104 countries, or almost 1.75 billion people, experience multidimensional poverty”.

On the other hand, globally the number of billionaires in the world increased by over 300 totalling 1210 and their combined net worth is \$4.5 trillion. A year-on-year comparison of wealth billionaires for 2008-2011 period shows that wealth in Asia-Pacific is nearly 24 per cent higher than the pre-financial crisis period and wealth in the Americas is 41 per cent higher.

The richest 2 per cent of the world's population own half of the world's wealth. The GDP (Gross Domestic Product, total of everyone's income) in the poorest 48 nations is less than the combined wealth of the world's three richest people. The poorest 40 per cent of the world's population accounts for 5 per cent of the global income. The richest 20 per cent of world's population accounts for three-quarters of world income. The average yearly income of the richest 20 per cent of people in the world is about 50 times greater than the yearly income of the poorest 20 per cent of people.

In the US, in terms of wealth rather than income, the top 1 per cent control 40 per cent. Twenty-five years ago, the corresponding figures were 12 per cent and 33 per cent. While the top 1 per cent have seen their incomes rise 18 per cent over the past decade, those in the middle have actually seen their incomes fall. As of the end of August 2011, America's top 400 held a combined \$1.53 trillion in personal wealth, a total 12 per cent up from last year and not that far off the top 400 all-time high, \$1.57 trillion, set in 2007, the year before the Great Recession hit. Back in 1982, an American of means needed at least \$75 million to enter the ranks of the *Forbes* 400. The entry threshold for the current 2011 list: \$1.05 billion. Between 1982 and 2011, the total combined fortunes on the *Forbes* 400 list have soared after taking inflation into account an eye-popping 612 per cent. Between 1983 and 2009, America's richest 5 per cent grabbed 82 per cent of all the nation's gains in wealth. The nation's bottom 60 per cent of households actually had less wealth in 2009 than in 1983.

In our country, India, on one hand we find the number of dollar billionaires on the rise along with the number of the poor and destitute. The number of dollar billionaires has increased from 52 in 2010 to 69 in 2011. Their combined assets equal to 30 per cent of Indian GDP. On the other hand, there are nearly 80 per cent of Indian population who are surviving on less than Rs 20 a day.

According to the *Human Development Report 2010*, "Unemployment and poverty worsened sharply: 34 million people lost their jobs, and 64 million more people fell under the \$1.25 a day poverty threshold. This stands on top of the 160200 million people who fell into poverty as a result of higher commodity prices in the preceding years. In 2010 unemployment averaged 9 per cent in developed countries and reached 10 per cent in the United States and 20 per cent in Spain". The International Labour Organization predicts that 43 million people who lost their jobs during the global financial crisis through 2009 risk entering long-term unemployment.

[2] Today USA has 702 military installations throughout the world in 132 countries. It possesses nearly 10,000 active and operational nuclear warheads, 2,000 of these are on hair trigger alert. During the Bush regime, it was his slogan: 'America is at war' that dominated US policy. This naturally sent its military expense in a spiral. In 1989, the US military expenditure was \$304.08 billion. This had fallen to \$280.96 billion in 1999. But it has now shot up to \$1.14 trillion. By the end of the Cold War, US military expenditure in total world military expenditure stood at 36 per cent and that of the USSR at 23.1 per cent. By 2008, its share of world military expenditure rose to 41.5 per cent.

The enlargement of NATO became a vital component of the 'project for the new American century' aimed at establishing global hegemony in the post-Cold War period. The charter of NATO was broadened to cover the whole globe. It was, thus, shaped into a politico-security vehicle to advance imperialist hegemony. In 1994, it adopted a strategic doctrine which essentially contained two objectives. The first was to rope in former Soviet republics and East European countries within NATO. The second was the self-declared objective giving itself the right for 'first use of military force' anywhere in the world based on its threat perception.



[3] The United States currently imports 51 per cent of its crude oil 19.5 million barrels daily. The Energy Information Administration estimates that by 2020, the United States will import 64 per cent of its crude 25.8 million barrels per day. Caspian region oil reserves might be the third largest in the world (following Western Siberia and the Persian Gulf) and, within the next 15 to 20 years, may be large enough to offset Persian Gulf oil. Caspian Sea oil and gas are not the only hydrocarbon deposits in the region. Turkmenistan's Karakum Desert holds the world's third largest gas reserves three trillion cubic meters and has six billion barrels of estimated oil reserves. Current estimates indicate that, in addition to huge gas deposits, the Caspian basin may hold as much as 200 billion barrels of oil 33 times the estimated holdings of Alaska's North Slope and a current value of \$4 trillion. It is enough to meet the United States' energy needs for 30 years or more. The presence of these oil reserves and the possibility of their export raise new strategic concerns for the United States and other Western industrial powers. As oil companies build pipelines from the Caucasus and Central Asia to supply Japan and the West, these strategic concerns gain military implications.

The US government Energy Information fact sheet on Afghanistan dated December 2000 says that: "Afghanistan's significance from an energy standpoint stems from its geographic position as a potential transit route for oil and natural gas exports from Central Asia to the Arabian Sea".

The Caspian Sea region has an estimated oil and gas resources worth \$4 trillion. For the USA, no region has emerged today to become as strategically significant as the Caspian.

This is the crux of the matter for the war in Afghanistan and the Af-Pak policy of US imperialism. This, however, seeks legitimacy behind the slogan of 'war on terror'. It becomes clear that to advance the interests of US oil majors, ensure security of multibillion dollar generating oil and gas export pipelines reaching the Arabian sea and to establish effective control over the resources in the region, US imperialism requires a strong ally in government in a unified Afghanistan.

## **Introduction**

This national conference of All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation is taking place after seven years. Last conference was held in Patna from where we started to re-build this organization brick by brick. We have some achievements and some failures too, particularly in making this organization broad based and an effective one to respond to different political developments. Though our draft political resolution analyzes the present international and national situation it will be important to make some comments on the situation we are living in and what should be our tasks in future to strengthen the peace and solidarity movement in our country.

## **The World We Are Living In**

Today, we are seeing the deepening of an economic crisis that originated from the US, and now threatens to engulf the world; a continuing war in the name of fighting "terror" in West Asia, North Africa and other parts of the world; new forms of war using drones for assassinations and cyber weapons; a climate crisis. It is clear that we are entering into a long term crisis of unprecedented proportions.

The developed countries have been the focus of the financial crisis and are trying to shift the burden of their recovery on the developing countries, particularly what are termed as the emerging economies. The G8 has been expanded to co-opt the emerging economies into G20 without ceding any major role for such powers.

Drastic cuts are being made into the livelihoods of the people in countries such as Greece and Spain in the name of balancing the budget but in actuality to bail out the major financial institutions of the EU and the US. The sovereign economic space of the third world countries is being eroded as western finance capital tries to pass the burden of its crisis on the working people of the world.

This not only poses huge challenges for the people all over the world but is also an opportunity for them to come together to oppose finance capital's attempts to pass its crisis on to the people and widen its imperialist wars for resources and markets.

## **Threats to peace and stability- US policies**

The imperialist forces led by the US are seeking to extend wars in the region and expand their military presence, particularly in its "pivot" to Asia. It is in continued occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan; supporting military interventions in Syria; has imposed savage economic and other sanctions on Iran with possibilities of spinning into another war; fully a part of Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands; bolstering completely undemocratic regimes in this part of the world, such as Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, etc. It is also seeking to encircle China.

The US today spends about 1 trillion dollars on past, present and future wars. The U.S. military budget is larger than the rest of the world's put together. The US spends 4.8% of its GDP on its military budget, a figure exceeded only by its ally Saudi Arabia which spends 10.4% of its GDP on its military budget. It has sought to privatise the war in Iraq and Afghanistan there are more contractors and mercenaries in Iraq and Afghanistan than there are U.S. military forces.

After the democratic movements in Tunisia and Egypt overthrew the dictators Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak, the US is making concerted attempts to subvert the struggle of the Arab people and try and mould it for its strategic purpose. NATO forces have militarily occupied Libya and are setting the stage for a similar intervention in Syria, all in the name of democracy. Libya is now rapidly joining Somalia as a failed state, with local militias and armed groups controlling different parts of the country. Arms from Libya have been used by Tuaregs and Ansar Din, a fundamentalist group to take over northern Mali.

At the same time, the US and NATO powers are helping the Gulf states -- Bahrain and Saudi Arabia - all sectarian monarchies to crush all democratic aspirations of the people. In order to keep its hegemony over the region, it is also helping dangerous sectarian conflicts, aligning with the most reactionary forces in the region.

On Iran, the US, its NATO allies and Israel have imposed illegal sanctions against Iran against its right to the nuclear fuel cycle that

it has under Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It may be noted that the US and its ally, Israel do not want any military competition to Israel in the region and that is why the threat of war against Iran.

In Palestine, the US has completely aligned with Israel's policy of expansion of settlements in the occupied West Bank and the brutal siege of Gaza.

The US is also introducing new kinds of war in the world. It is using drone attacks in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, etc. in violation of International Humanitarian Law. The US is now proclaiming its unfettered right to assassinate anybody, anywhere without recourse to any law - either international or domestic.

The other new form of war is cyber war. Its defence doctrine had identified as the US objective full spectrum dominance over land, water, air, space and cyberspace. The attacks on Iran's civilian nuclear program using Stuxnet, Duqu and now Flame virus are meant not for stealing data but causing physical damage to estimated 10,000 centrifuges in Busher nuclear fuel complex.

### **Where India stands today**

India had a history from the days of the independence movement to support all freedom struggles throughout the world. This also became the cornerstone of the post independence foreign policy. The non-aligned movement was not just an expression of not aligning with either of the two power blocks in the world but also a dynamic one of seeking complete decolonisation of the world.

It is this independent foreign policy that India has been changing in the last two decades. Starting with the shift to neoliberal policies in the economic sphere, there is also the strategic shift towards aligning with the US. It is this strategic shift that has seen a series of military and security ties being created between the US and India.

The Defence Framework Agreement with the US was signed in June 2005. Under this agreement, India is to collaborate with the US in its military operations, step up purchase of military hardware from the US and also cooperate with the US on its "National Missile Defence" system. The US has been putting pressure on India to sign

a Logistics and Service Agreement and draw India into US-Israel military misadventures in West Asia. All this, severely compromises India's independent foreign policy.

While India still continues to support Palestine's right to an independent state, it has become the largest buyer of Israeli arms - more than even Israel's own armed forces. This makes India complicit in Israel's occupation and apartheid regime as it is seen to be helping to subsidise Israeli occupation of West Bank and Gaza. On a number of issues India is siding with the US. Very recently India vote against Syria in UN Security council. The most glaring instance is the Iran sanctions, on which India voted with the US on two crucial occasions in IAEA and on the issue of Iran Pakistan India Gas pipeline. It seems India prefer the far more expensive route of trying to get nuclear reactors worth 10,000 MW from US companies GE and Westinghouse in place of much cheaper Iran gas - makes clear how India's energy policy is being distorted under US pressure.

While the change in foreign policy has been one of the characteristics of the last two decades, the neoliberal economic policies have sharpened disparities, created a huge number of billionaires while 77% of the Indian people live on less than Rs. 20 a day. These economic policies have been to promote unbridled loot of natural resources, pauperising of the peasantry and the working people and enriching a small section of the India elite. The support to the strategic shift to a more pro-US policies is also an expression of India's big capital aligning with global capital.

### **Challenges for AIPSO**

It is clear that the forces of neoliberal policies and of war today have come together. This is a war for control of resources in West Asia, and Africa and the destruction of all states that oppose the hegemony of the neoliberal order. The climate crisis and other environmental disasters are a consequence of this path of global development.

Establishment of a stable multi-polar world economic and social order, based on equity and justice for all, is crucial for ensuring sustainable peace at all levels - country, region and international.

There is a growing awareness that capitalism's reign must be brought under control if humanity is to survive. Consequently; 'anti-globalization', 'Occupy Wall Street', mass demonstrations in Western Europe against austerity, and other such movements are emerging around the world.

In India, the thrust of neoliberal economic policies have been to hand over the country's natural resources to most rapacious forms of capital, as witnessed in mining everywhere. The corruptions and scams are all a part of this plunder of the country's natural resources.

Simultaneously, these policies have also translated in a strategic shift of India aligning with the US and the NATO powers on a number of issues.

Forces for peace in India have therefore to bring together the various forms of resistance that is springing up and relate their specific struggles to the larger struggle for peace in a sustainable world. It is not possible to fight for peace in isolation from the other struggles that are taking place in the country and elsewhere.

This demands the broadest unity to be built on the issues of resistance to war, assault on the livelihood of the people and on the environment. It is important therefore that the peace movement in the country brings together forces not only within political parties that are seeking to combat the forces of war and plunder, but also forces that are outside the political parties that are in the same struggle for a just society based on sustainable development.

In this context we have to agree that the issue of broadening our organization remains one of the key tasks. It needs proper political understanding among our leadership. They should understand that this is not a joint political platform of different parties on the issue of peace and solidarity, rather it is organization of common Indian people who are ready to carry forward the ideals of anti-imperialist solidarity, peace, democracy, secularism and believe that India as a peace loving country, a torch bearer of Panchseel and Non Aligned Movement with its size, diversity, pluralism and its deep-rooted democratic institution can play the leading role in shaping the

present world- a world of peace, cooperation, stability and development.

We have to reach out to the people of India and here lies our capacity as peace warriors how we can bring them in our fold going beyond our political affiliations with common understanding. We believe our understanding can be similar to the last Non-Align Meeting declaration as they stated that "All human rights are indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, and human rights issues must be addressed through a constructive, non-confrontational, non-politicized, non-selective and dialogue-based as well as cooperative approach, in a fair, equal and balanced manner, with objectivity, respect for cultural diversity and national sovereignty and territorial integrity, noninterference in the internal affairs of States, taking into account the political, historical, social, religious and cultural particularities of each country".

In this respect let us recall the political declaration of founding conference of AIPSO in 1972 which stated that **"Peace is every Indian's business. The struggle to build the unity of the anti-imperialist forces calls for the active continuous participation of every patriotic son and daughter of this land.**

**Come and join our movement, ever-growing united national mass movement of the Indian people, this movement which is the part of the mighty World Peace and Solidarity movement, the greatest movement of the people in human history. United we have the power to give flesh and blood to the hopes and longings of the martyrs. United we have the power to make India a source of ever greater strength for the anti-imperialist forces in every country of the world, for the movements for peace in every corner of the globe.**

**Light the lamps! Ring the bells! The pain of suffering shall be taken away from the eyes of our children. Those eyes must shine with new joy and confidence in the future of our Mother land."**

## **Part-II**

### **State level Organisations**

We have the functioning state councils in A.P, Kerala, Bihar, West Bengal and Manipur. Recently a few more have been added. The successful state conferences were held with broad participation in Pondicherry, Rajasthan, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Chattisgarh, Uttarakhand and A.P.

State level conventions were organized in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal

There are some units active in Orissa, Punjab, Jammu and Jharkhand. We have to take proper initiatives to build organizations in other states.

### **Activities at the National Level**

Since the last national conference, AIPSO leadership organized many events and activities. The Secretariat also extended its support and cooperation to other organizations particularly on the issue of solidarity with the people of Palestine, Cuba and Syria and participated in all joint activities and also took part in many international events.

One of our most successful activities is to organize India-Vietnam People's Festival. Already four festivals were organized twice in Vietnam and twice in India. Fifth festival will be held in India. Preparations are going on in Manipur, Assam and Meghalaya.

To chalk out our plan of activity Office bearers, Executive and All India Committee meetings were held but the presence from different states were not up to the mark. This conference should take serious note on this issue.

### **Function of the Secretariat**

Last Conference elected 37 office bearers and 11 members Secretariat. Looking at the composition of the present Secretariat one can easily understand how difficult it is to hold meeting of these members on day to day basis. So it was through consultations on



telephones/fax/emails the majority of decisions were taken. Now we have to change this situation for better functioning.

### **Relations with other organizations**

AIPSO is the Secretary and regional coordinator of World Peace Council and Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation. In both organizations AIPSO has played an important role in the past and we have to play a more active role even now for improving working of these organizations. We have to regularize our contacts with the member organizations of AIPSO and WPC.

During this period the leadership took many initiatives to strengthen its relationship with Peace & Solidarity organizations in other countries. We have established once again our contacts with all most all member organizations of WPC and AIPSO.

### **Peace and solidarity**

This journal was playing an useful role in propagating our views on different issues and subjects. But unfortunately after Patna national conference not many issues have appeared. It is mainly due to less coordination among the members of the editorial board many of whom are living in different states. We have to plan in proper way so that our journal comes out regularly.

### **Propaganda**

Our entire propaganda depends on our journal. But it has its own limitations. We should opt for better technologies available today for mass campaigning and projecting our views to grassroots level. We have to take seriously having our own website in near future. We must intervene on social media.

### **Finance**

The finance is very important for organization like AIPSO to carry its day-to-day work as well as to organize its activities. The new

committee has to discuss this issue seriously. During these years experience shows that we can mobilize funds if we are active. The audited account will explain our income and expenditure in detail. At the same time, the positive development is that many of our state committees have started to paying their membership fees. But it is not enough. We have to take different measures to collect at least 25 Lakh rupees within 2013.

To realize the main objectives, AIPSO needs broad participation of individuals, political and social organizations. Recognizing the diverse views and positions of different political tendencies, we have to go forward with broad approaches on different issues.

Considering the present situation in our work and to take proper measures for building a strong peace movement in the country we propose the following steps to be taken seriously.

**1.To take more political and organizational initiatives to keep and enhance the broad character of AIPSO. The pluralistic character of our organisation should be reflected in electing the leadership and also in the decision making process at all levels.**

2.To organize local conference every year, district conference every two years and state conference every four years on the basis of mass membership.

3.To have more frequent meetings of the Secretariat and other leading bodies of AIPSO at all levels.

4.To guarantee regular publication of "Peace and Solidarity" with useful content. To initiate a planned subscription campaign so that within six months we can have minimum five thousand subscribers.

The editorial board should be formed among those working from centre for bring out the publication on regular basis.

**5.To have more joint activities with like minded organizations on issues affecting common people.**

6.To play more active role in WPC and AAPSO in their activities. To organize and co-organise more activities in India and the region

under the slogan "Hands of Asia" as adopted in last WPC Assembly. Also to plan the regional peace march from Lahore to Dhaka under the slogan "for peace, harmony & better neighbourly relations".

7. For better coordination, the central office has to be upgraded with staffs and modern office Equipments.

8. To mobilize 25 Lakhs for central fund within one year.

### **Part-III**

#### **AIPSO activities since 2007**

##### **Campaigns and activities:**

The 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first war of Independence was observed throughout the country.

The campaign in defence of independent foreign policy was also organized in different states

**Hiroshima-Nagasaki Day (6-9<sup>th</sup> August)** was observed in different cities in India. AIPSO units in Kerala, Maharashtra, UP and West Bengal organized different events on this occasion. Lalit Sujjan, Vice President of AIPSO attended the International Conference against the Atom Bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan.

##### **1<sup>st</sup> India-Vietnam People's Festival:**

It was really a successful event in all terms. A 35 member strong delegation under the leadership of Madam Binh, the legendary leader of Vietnamese resistance and former Vice-President of Vietnam attended this important festival. In three cities, the Vietnamese delegation was received in big way. More than thirty-five events were organized for the festival. The top leadership of different political parties and Governments attended this Festival. The state committee of West Bengal & Bihar should be thanked for making the Festival a great success.

##### **Protest against the Naval Exercise in Bay of Bengal:**

Different state committees of AIPSO also organized many protest

## **All India Committee Meeting at Raipur**

The All India Committee (AIC) of the AIPSO met on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> May 2008 in Raipur, Chattisgarh, called for mass mobilization in defence of independent foreign policy and decided to hold two months long solidarity campaign with the people of Palestine and stopping of military cooperation with Israel.

## **National Seminar on Global Warming and Climate Change**

A National level Seminar on Global warming and climate change was held in Thiruvananthapuram on July 25<sup>th</sup> 2008. The Theme of the seminar was "Prevent the disaster...Save the Planet". 350 delegates participated in that Seminar. Many well known environmental scientist and other dignitaries attended that Seminar.

## **Asia-Pacific Conference in Solidarity with the People of Cuba**

This Conference was held in Sri Lanka from 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> June 2008. The Indian National Committee for Solidarity with Cuba participated with big delegation. AIPSO also participated in this meeting. Com. Azzez Pasha, Rabin Deb, Kadaru Prabhakar Rao represented AIPSO in that meeting.

## **26<sup>th</sup> July- Cuban rebellion Day**

Delhi and in some other places different types of activities were organized. In Kolkata a big public meeting was organized.

## **6-9<sup>th</sup> August- Hiroshima-Nagasaki Day**

Different activities were organized in many states. AIPSO sent two member delegation to attend the international conference in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

## **Second India-Vietnam People's Festival**

As decided in Raipur meeting, the Second India-Vietnam Peoples' Festival held in Vietnam from 10<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> August 2008. The theme of the Festival was "**Let our solidarity & Cooperation further deepen for durable partnership**"

From India a 55 member delegation attended this Festival. The Festival was a successful one. The Vietnamese side gave tremendous importance to this event. The President of Vietnam along with other leaders attended different activities. The entire delegation behaved well and participated in all events.

Only criticism is that the quality of our cultural delegation was not up to the mark. Next time we should take some professionals.

### **8<sup>th</sup> AAPSO Congress in Hyderabad**

AIPSO hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> Congress of AAPSO at Hyderabad from December 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> 2008. The theme of the Congress was ***“AAPSO in an Interdependent World, to Strengthen South-South Cooperation, for Peoples Solidarity against War, for Peace and Development”***.

The A.P Committee formed a broad-based Reception Committee involving the Leadership of different political parties and important personalities. Sri K.Yadav Reddy, General Secretary AIPSO was the General Secretary of the Reception Committee. The Congress was inaugurated by the Late Chief Minister Y. S. Rajsekhar Reddy.

The Congress was well organized. The food, accommodation, and propaganda everything was perfect. The political involvement of different political parties as well as mass organizations was very good. AIPSO representatives from different states also participated in the Congress. The foreign participation was good but not to the expectations. It was due to terrorist attacks on Mumbai many organizations decided not to come at the last moment.

### **Solidarity with Palestine**

After the Israeli army attacked Gaza, the state committees of AP and West Bengal organized big protest meetings and demonstrations. Some places in UP also organized some activities.

The most important meeting was organized in Goa. It was attended by more than thousand people representing all walks of life. The meeting was addressed by important personalities

including former minister of external affairs Edward Felirio. As a follow up of the meeting a organising committee for AIPSO was formed.

## 2009

**Campaign for Palestine** The meeting decided to observe 30<sup>th</sup> March as International Solidarity Day with the People of Palestine. Some states have organized activities.

**Anti NATO Conference in Serbia** The Belgrade Forum for a 'World of Equals' organized an Anti-NATO conference in Serbia from March 23-24, 2009 in memory of the victims of NATO's war on Serbia. K. Prabhakar Rao (AP) and R.S. Zivanandan (Puducherry) attended this Conference. **Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting**

The Asian Regional Consultative Meeting of the World Peace Council hosted by Nepal Peace and Solidarity Council (NPSC), was held in Kathmandu on 12-13<sup>th</sup> June 2009. Delegations from Bangladesh, Burma, India, Laos, Nepal, Pakistan, Vietnam and Syria attended this meeting. Com. Iraklis, Executive Secretary of WPC attended this meeting. Pallab Sengupta attended this meeting. The meeting decided that next year (2010) NPSC will organize Asian Peace Conference in Nepal.

**Kerala State Conference** Though a call was given to different state committees to organize their respective state/district level conferences only Kerala state committee has organized its state conference. Lalit Surjan, attended that meeting on behalf of the All India Committee.

## Trilateral Peace Meeting

On the initiative of AIPSO the first ever meeting of the Peace movements from India, China, Russia was held in Beijing from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2009. The theme of this trilateral meeting was "Peace, Development, Stability and quest for Multi-polar World". Over 30 representatives and scholars from the Chinese, Indian and Russian people's organizations attended the Meeting. Pallab Sengupta, Nilotpall Basu, K. Yadav Reddy, Prof. Barun Mukherjee, MP, Dr. Nara

Singh, Rabin Deb and Dr. Janardan Kurup attended this important meeting. The Meeting agreed to hold the next meeting in Russia in 2010.

**26<sup>th</sup> July- Cuban rebellion Day** Delhi and in other places different types of activities were organized. In Kolkata a big public meeting was organized. **6-9<sup>th</sup> August- Hiroshima-Nagasaki Day** Different activities were organized in many states. On behalf of AIPSO Biplab Chakraborty attended the international conference in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

**World Peace Council Executive Committee Meeting in Damascus** The World Peace Council held its executive committee meetings from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> October 2009 in Damascus, Syria. This was the first E.C. meeting after the WPC Assembly held in Venezuela in April 2008. Members participated with great enthusiasm and it recorded highest attendance in an EC meeting in the last twenty years. Some 50 delegates representing 35 member organizations and countries were present. Lalit Surjan attended that meeting as AIPSO representative.

### **Visit to AAPSO HQ**

AAPSO Congress held in Hyderabad in December 2008 agreed that AIPSO will replace Mr.Nouri, the Present Secretary General of AAPSO. With this understanding in mind the last Executive Meeting gave mandate to the General Secretaries to find proper person to be the next Secretary General of AAPSO. Lalit Surjan, Vice President of AIPSO was selected by the Secretariat and was informed to all concerned including AAPSO. Pallab Sengupta introduced Lalit Surjan as the future Secretary General of AAPSO to the AAPSO Secretariat meeting held in Cairo in the month of November 2008. But due to unavoidable circumstances Lalit has to come back to India.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> India-Vietnam Friendship Festival**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> India-Vietnam Festival was held from 10<sup>th</sup> December to 15<sup>th</sup> December 2009 in Hyderabad and Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh and Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Shournoor and

Kozhikode in Kerala. A Twenty one member Vietnamese delegation headed by Com. Tran Dac Loi attended the Festival. The holding of the Festival was very difficult as dates of the Festival were changed three times and finally when we agreed to the time-table for the Festival then the situation in Hyderabad was very tense due to the Telengana movement. One should appreciate the way our comrades and friends in AP have organized the Festival in Hyderabad and in Vijayawada. The overall arrangements for the delegates and activities were very good. Com. Yadav Reddy, General Secretary of AIPSO personally took care of the entire event in Hyderabad along with other comrades and friends. The programme in Vijayawada was also very good. A large number of people came to attend the function defying 24hr bandh. Representatives from major political parties attended both the programmes in Andhra Pradesh.

The programme in Kerala was also very good. At every place people in big number attended the programmes. Many Ministers of Kerala state government and other political leaders from all political streams attended the Festival. But the logistic arrangements for the delegation in Kerala were not up to the mark.

We can say with confidence that the 3<sup>rd</sup> India-Vietnam People's Festival have further strengthened the friendship between India and Vietnam.

## **2010**

### **100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Late President Ho Chi Minh**

A big meeting was organized in Delhi on 19<sup>th</sup> May to commemorate 120<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Com. Ho Chi Minh. It was attended by a large number of intellectuals, students and other sections of the society. Vietnamese nationals living in Delhi also attended the meeting. Ambassador of Vietnam, Sitaram Yechury, Amarjeet Kaur and others addressed the meeting. A film on the visit of Comrade Ho Chi Minh to India was shown at the meeting.

### **6-9<sup>th</sup> August Hiroshima-Nagasaki Day**

Different activities were organized in many states. On behalf of AIPSO Dr. A.Khan attended the international conference in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



## **65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the August Revolution of Vietnam**

Pallab Sengupta, General Secretary, attended the meeting and other events dedicated to the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the August Revolution in Vietnam

## **Conference on Palestine**

AIPSO along with other organizations organized an international conference on Palestine at Delhi on 22-23<sup>rd</sup> September. It was a very successful conference on all counts. There was a high-level participation from Israel and Palestine. Indian participation was also very good. The AIPSO has to support such initiatives in future too. AIPSO contributed greatly in mobilizing the political parties from this region and spent Rs,100,000 Lakh for successful holding of this conference.

## **AAPSO Conference on Palestine**

AIPSO delegation also attended the Arab consultative meeting of the World Peace Council and Palestinian Solidarity Meeting organized by AAPSO in Cairo. Com. Nilotpal Basu, General Secretary and Com. Yugal Rayalu from Maharashtra attended these two meetings.

## **WPC Secretariat Meeting**

Pallab Sengupta, General Secretary attended the WPC Secretariat Meeting of WPC held in Brussels.

## **Study tour to China**

A 15 member delegation visited China from 21<sup>st</sup> November to 5<sup>th</sup> December. This delegation was invited by the Chinese People's Association for Peace & Disarmament.

## **100<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary celebration of Dr. Kotnis**

To commemorate 100 birth anniversary of Dr. Kotnis, the state unit of West Bengal, A.P. and Bihar organized different activities. The AIPSO Secretariat with the help of Delhi AIPSO Committee also organized a big public meeting.

On the invitation of AIPSO a high-level six member delegation from China visited India. They attended meetings in Kolkata and Delhi.

The meeting in Kolkata, organized by AIPSO was very good in terms of attendance, speeches and the programme itself. Three Vice-Chancellors of Kolkata University, Jadavpur University and Rabindra Bharati University attended and spoke at the meeting. The leader of the Chinese delegation and the leaders of the AIPSO also addressed the meeting.

The meeting in Hyderabad was also very good. AIPSO along with other organizations organized that meeting. Chinese Ambassador was the main speaker there.

The meeting in Delhi was well attended. The hall was packed to the capacity. The meeting was addressed by the Chinese Ambassador, Leader of the Chinese delegation, Sitaram Yeachury, Mrs Amarjeet Kaur, G.Devrajan and Pallab Sengupta.

## **2011**

### **Asia-Pacific Consultative meeting in Nepal, 12-13<sup>th</sup> March, 2011**

A 29 members AIPSO delegation (from centre-4, Maharastra-3, West Bengal-10, Orissa-12) attended this meeting in Nepal. The meeting was inaugurated by then Prime Minister of Nepal Sri. Jalanath Kannal. Delegation from six countries including China attended this meeting.

### **Peace Conference in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 4-5<sup>th</sup> June, 2011**

After long time the Bangladesh Peace Council organized an event in Dhaka. It was well attended conference in all terms. The Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the Conference and President of Bangladesh attended the closing session. A eight member delegation from AIPSO attended this event. Com. Sitaram Yechury headed this delegation.

### **4<sup>th</sup> India-Vietnam People's Festival, 18-23, September, 2011**

The 4<sup>th</sup> India-Vietnam People's Festival was held from 18<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> September in Vietnam. 25 member delegates from Andhra Pradesh

and Kerala attended this festival. Com. K. Yadav Reddy was the leader of the delegation. Com. Pallab Sengupta also joined the delegation. The Vice President and four other cabinet ministers from Vietnam joined the festival activities. Com. Madam Binh came for an hour from hospital just to meet the Indian delegation. This time the cultural performance of the Indian artists were highly appreciated by the Vietnamese side.

### **Solidarity Mission to Palestine, 18-22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2011**

World Peace Council and World Federation of Democratic Youth jointly organized a solidarity Mission to Palestine. On behalf of AIPSO Com. Nilotpal Basu joined this delegation. It was a timely initiative of the WPC.

### **Executive Meeting of World Peace Council, 17-18 October 2011**

The Executive Meeting of the World Peace Council was held in Brussels on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2011. Com. Pallab Sengupta attended this meeting. The meeting decided to hold next Assembly of WPC in Nepal in 2012.

### **Arab-Asia Dialogue, 14-15<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

AIPSO in cooperation with Action-Aid, India and World Forum for Alternatives organized two days meeting for strengthening dialogues between the scholars and activists from Arab and Asian region. Many important personalities from both region participated in this event.

### **South Asian Social Forum, 18-21<sup>st</sup> November, 2011**

The South Asian Social Forum was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh from 18-21<sup>st</sup> November, 2011. Within the framework of this event a Solidarity meeting with Palestine was organized by the Bangladesh Peace Council, AIPSO and Nepal Peace & Solidarity Council. Com. Nilotpal Basu and Com. Prabir Purkastha attend this meeting.

### **Solidarity with Syria**

AIPSO participated in a solidarity delegation organized by WPC in Syria to understand the real situation there and declare their solidarity with people of Syria. Com. Nilotpal Basu and Com. Azeez Pasha were in this delegation

### **122<sup>nd</sup> birth anniversary of late President Ho Chi Minh**

AIPSO organized a big meeting in Delhi to commemorate the 122<sup>nd</sup> birth anniversary of Com. Ho Chi Minh. It was well attended meeting. Political leaders from Congress, CPI(M), CPI and others along with Vietnam Ambassador addressed the meeting.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> BRICS meeting in Delhi**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> BRICS meeting of the peace organizations was held in Delhi 17-18 July 2012. The delegation from Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa participated in this Meeting. Almost all office bearer of AIPSO participated in this meeting along with some state delegations. The discussions were very good and educative. Meeting decided that 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of this kind will be held in South Africa.

### **Assembly of the World Peace Council**

The last Assembly of the WPC was held at Kathmandu in Nepal from 20-23 July 2012. Our Nepali brothers did their best to have the successful assembly there. The political atmosphere around the assembly was very conducive for very free and constructive discussions. The results of this assembly shows that the peace movement world over is getting strengthened. The AIPSO has to take more political and material responsibilities to strengthen the presence of WPC in this region.

✓ Transformational agenda in Peace Movement