

ACTION ALERT AA 19-5: CONFLICT BETWEEN USA AND IRAN

As Quakers we seek a world without war. We seek a sustainable and just community. We have a vision of an Australia that upholds human rights and builds peace internationally, with particular focus on our region. In our approach to government we will promote the importance of dialogue, of listening and of seeking that of God in every person. We aim to work for justice and to take away the occasion for war.

July 2019

The tension between the USA and Iran has escalated to a point where armed conflict is possible. This could involve Australia as a US ally. It is time for all who work for peace to speak out against this possibility. This Alert offers some background and points that can be taken up with our political representatives.

The Current Situation

Until recently, Iran has – according to the International Atomic Energy Agency - fully complied with the terms of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and has not proceeded to develop nuclear weapons. The United Nations Security Council (resolution 2231 in 2015) had endorsed unanimously the JCPOA. Yet the USA pulled out of the JCPOA a year ago, imposed economic sanctions, and threatened other countries which trade with Iran. The Iranian people have suffered as a result.

Recently there have been several incidents that has raised the level of tension – the US deployed a carrier strike group to the Middle East, there were two attacks on tankers in the Gulf, and US drone was shot down by Iran. In each case Iran has been held responsible for the increased threat. President Trump withdrew a bombing attack on Iran at the last moment, but has increased sanctions on Iran. Iran, as a result of the US actions, have now exceeded the amount of uranium allowed under the JCPOA. While the Europeans have tried to discourage Iran from this action, they continue to look for ways to save the agreement.

There is no credible threat to Australia, yet our government appears intent on seeking ways to support the US, rather than to reduce the threat of war. Following past experience of our being drawn into Vietnam and Iraq, with terrible casualties on all sides as a result, it is essential that we act to prevent action by our government to become involved in an armed response to this conflict.

Action

You are urged to make known your concern to all political representatives along the following lines:

- Make it clear that you do not want Australia to be part of any warlike response, and that every effort must be made by US allies to resist pressure to build up the aggressive approach being adopted by the US government. Remind them that the UN Security Council supported the nuclear deal.
- Urge MPs and Senators to seek opportunities to raise their concerns within their parties and in Parliament.
- Encourage government ministers to support moves to work with allies and other nations to de-escalate the conflict, and restore diplomacy and dialogue as the primary means to seek a way forward towards disarmament measures.

You can also join the petition on the link below (Stop War Coalition):

<https://www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/no-australian-support-for-trump-s-war-on-iran>

Other good references are:

Australians for War Powers Reform www.warpowersreform.org.au

Independent and Peaceful Australia Network www.ipan.org.au

Canberra
June 2019