

Int'l Network to Abolish Foreign Military Bases: Inaugural Conference Set for March 2007 in Ecuador

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30 October 2005 — After a long process of consultations and discussions, organizers have set 7-10 March 2007 as the date and Ecuador as the venue of the planned inaugural conference of an international network to abolish foreign military bases.

The conference is aimed to be the biggest gathering of anti-bases campaigners, researchers, and activists from around the world in recent history.

Since the invasion of Iraq by the United States and its coalition, there has been a renewed push on campaigning for the closure of foreign military bases around the world. The United States, among other countries with bases, maintains an estimated 725 bases and other forms of military presence in about 150 countries.

History shows that where there's a foreign military base, there's a grassroots movement to get it shut down. Over the last two years, organizations and individuals calling for the closure of these bases have come together for the first time in various meetings or through the internet so as to form a global network.

There have been anti-bases educational workshops and coordination meetings during the World Social Forum in India in 2004 and in Brazil in 2005 as well as other regional or national anti-bases meetings. Over 300 subscribers from around the world exchange news, updates, and other information related to bases and anti-bases organizing in a vibrant e-mail community.

The planned inaugural conference is intended to provide anti-bases activists space for closer interaction, for exchanging lessons and sharing experiences, for laying the ground for more effective global coordination, and for building strategies for more effective international campaigning.

Organizers of the conference also hope to further broaden the network, with special attention to getting grassroots or community-based anti-bases activists to be involved and to take the lead in the network.

Between now and the conference, organizers hope to actively reach out and build links with local anti-bases activists in as many bases around the world as possible.

The decision to hold the meeting in Ecuador in 2007 was made jointly by an international organizing committee composed of various organizations around the world together with a national organizing committee that has been formed by groups involved in anti-bases actions in Ecuador.

[For more information on the conference, please get in touch with [herbert focusweb.org](http://herbert.focusweb.org).]