

**Meeting of the Enlarged Presidium of the European Peace Forum,
Prague, March 21, 2003**

Statement of the Presidium of the European Peace Forum (epf) on the occasion of the anniversary of NATO aggression against Yugoslavia and on the „Hague Tribunal“

For over a year now the trial of Slobodan Milosevic, the president of the Socialist Party of Serbia and the long time president of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, has been going on before the so-called International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. This trial in a court, which was established in violation of the UN Charta, is designed to legitimize in the retrospect the illegal interference of NATO states in the internal conflict of Yugoslavia, their acts committed in order to disrupt the federation of six equal republics, fostering civil war and followed by their aggression against the Balkan country, and to shift the responsibility for the crimes of the aggressors on to the shoulders of the aggressed.

Despite the fact, that the chief prosecutor, appointed by NATO, doesn't lack anything in terms of secret service assistance and obvious partiality of the judges, political support of most of NATO member states and subservient assistance from the rulers in Belgrade, carefully selected and prepared witnesses as well as staff and money – the court so far has spent more than one billion US-Dollars, many times the amount assigned for “immediate assistance” to Serbia and Montenegro – they have not succeeded in bringing Slobodan Milosevic to his heels. On the contrary, the accused, who became the symbol of resistance against the disruption of Yugoslavia and against the dictate of foreign powers and their war of aggression, despite being subjected to intolerable conditions of prison detainment and court procedures, has become the accuser of NATO. This is mainly, why this trial, which was trumpeted as a war legitimizing show, in the coverage of quite a few media has turned into a sort of secret trial, covering up the debacle of the prosecutors and the sovereign stance of the accused defending himself.

The political objectives to be served with this trial go far beyond the former Yugoslavia and the Balkans. The leading power of NATO patronizing this trial intends to demonstrate to the whole world by way of example, that any resistance against the global ambitions of the US will not be tolerated and punished without mercy. States supporting politically the illegal Hague tribunal and also in terms of staff and money, approving and promoting the trial against the former Yugoslav president, are also supporting – willingly or unwillingly – the hegemonial ambitions of the US, their threatening approach towards the “Axis of Evil”, their intention to reshape entire regions of the world according to Washington's own taste and geostrategic interests. In the same way the war against Yugoslavia has prepared the war against the Iraqi People the trial against Slobodan Milosevic is meant to create a precedent for the masters of the imperialist globalisation intending to deal with their present and future opponents in a similar way.

Any person, who condemns the US-Government's plans for world domination – whatever reason one might have for that condemnation – , any person who declares, as recently even did some NATO governments, that it is impossible to accept that the strength of the law is replaced by the law of the stronger one, such a person, if he or she means to be honest, should not be able any longer to support the Hague trial, which is instrumental in the abuse of the international law, replacing it precicely by the law of the stronger one.

The international law can not be split up. It must apply in the Balkans as well as in the Near and Middle East and anywhere in the world. This is, what we are struggling for. Therefore on the eve of the fourth anniversary of NATO aggression against Yugoslavia we renew our demands for

- an immediate end of the trials of Slobodan Milosevic and the other yugoslav accused as well as their immediate release,
- the dissolution of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Jugoslavia which was established in breach of the UN Charta
- the ratification, as soon as possible, by the United States of America and other states of the Treaty of Rom establishing a legally constituted International Criminal Court and an estension its jurisdiction in order to apply also to the crime of aggression and other crimes against peace,
- the punishment NATO leaders responsable for the war of aggression against Yugoslavia,
- war reparations for Serbia and Montenegro
- compensation for damage for war victims in those contries.

In view of recent political developments in Serbia and Montenegro we strongly condemn, that the the criminal investigations against the supposed assassins of primeminister Zoran Djindjic are being used as an excuse by the Serbian government in oder to suspend fundametal civil rights. We demand

- the immediate stop of the arbitrary and politically motivated arrests,
- the guarantee of all democratic rights for the indicted individuals,
- the abolition of the censureship of the media and the guarantee of the unimpeded right to obtain information,
- the restauration of the freedom of association, the right of assembly and the right to demonstrate publicly,
- the immediate end of the criminilization of political opposition.

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