

MEDIA ALERT

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**Australia need not be a 'Frightened Country':
Security through dialogue with China not by threat of US force**

Sydney Peace Foundation, responsible for Australia's only international award for peace, insists that the best way to enhance Australia's security in the Asia Pacific century is to engage in energetic dialogue with Chinese representatives at all levels of government and non-government organizations.

By contrast, the proposal to increase the number of US ships, planes and marines in Australia's far north is a repeat of centuries of short sighted assumptions that dialogue occurs only after conflict and that military force always provides stability and security.

Director of the Sydney Peace Foundation, Professor Stuart Rees says, 'Instead of imagination to re-define what security means and how it can be realized, Australian citizens are told that China is the 21st century threat, hence the need to bolster the military alliance with the US.

Instead of foreshadowing enthusiastic engagement with China and with all other nations in the region, politicians from government and opposition cower behind the promise of more US forces on Australian soil and rub their hands at the prospect of extra income from US marines on leave in Darwin, even though trade with China dwarfs that with the USA.

Instead of hearing from commentators concerned with the links between peace and economic development, concerned to show how dialogue about human rights forges friendships, mainstream media mostly parrots the Kevin Rudd line 'I know best, the build up of arms is the way to security.'

We desperately need different values, different ways of thinking and writing: the language of a common humanity, of peace with justice. We do not need to be treated to the same old mantras of militarism that for centuries have resulted in the destruction of people and environments.'

'We ask President Obama and Prime Minister Gillard, 'When will you ever learn?' When will you realize that your militarism makes 'Never Again' sound so hollow !

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