

[INSERT CITY/STATE] DECLARATION OF PEACE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: **Contact:** [INSERT NAME, NUMBER & EMAIL]
[INSERT DATE]

Local Religious, Community Leaders Engage in Nonviolent Moral Witness, Urge Members of Congress to Seek a New Direction in Iraq

*Events part of a nationwide campaign with simultaneous
events in more than [INSERT NUMBER] cities.*

Today [INSERT LOCAL GROUP NAME], a member organization of the Declaration of Peace campaign, called on [LOCAL Rep., Sen., etc] to demand support for pending legislation that would set a date for an exit from Iraq.

[LOCAL GROUP NAME] members engaged in creative, nonviolent action by [BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION, HOW MANY PEOPLE PARTICIPATED, WHERE THE ACTION TOOK PLACE, ANY REACTION FROM REPS. OR SENS. STAFF]

These actions are part of a national grassroots week of action from September 21-28 to bear moral witness to the ongoing occupation in Iraq and to urge Members of Congress to approve and implement a plan for peace.

The Declaration of Peace is a coalition of over 370 national, regional and local religious, peace, veterans and student groups, including [INSERT LOCAL GROUP NAME], United for Peace and Justice, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Network of Spiritual Progressives, Veterans for Peace, the United Church of Christ (Justice and Witness Ministries), The Shalom Center, Methodist Federation for Social Action, The American Friends Service Committee, and Student Peace Action Network.

The Declaration of Peace was created through discussions beginning last January between student groups, religious leaders and secular peace organizations. The coalition believes that it is time for Congress to demand that the Bush Administration provide a comprehensive, concrete and rapid plan to end the war in Iraq, including a prompt timetable for withdrawal of troops, a peace process for security, reconstruction and reconciliation, and the shifting of war funding to meet education, healthcare and employment needs (*Declaration of Peace goals listed below*).

The campaign choose September 21 as a deadline for taking action because this date has been declared by the United Nations to be the International Day of Peace. This week, declaration

signers nationwide have mobilized a series of activities including marches, vigils and nonviolent acts of civil disobedience nationwide at Congressional district offices and in Washington, DC at the Capitol and White House.

“We have reached a defining moment in our nation’s history. We have a moral obligation to urge our local officials not to be silent in the face of escalating violence,” said **[INSERT SPOKESPERSON]** of **[INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME]**. “Instead of funding bloodshed, our government should be concerned with taking care of the education, healthcare and employment needs of all citizens,” **[she/he]** said.

Goals of the Declaration of Peace

Establishing and Completing a Comprehensive Plan to End the US War in Iraq

The Declaration of Peace is a commitment to take nonviolent steps for a comprehensive, concrete and rapid end to the US war in Iraq, including:

- Withdrawal of US troops and all coalition forces
- Closure of US military bases
- Support for an Iraqi-led peace process, including a peace conference to shape a post-occupation transition and an international peacekeeping presence if mandated by this peace process
- Return of Iraqi control over its oil resources and the political and economic life of the nation
- Reparations and reconstruction to address the destruction caused by the US war and thirteen years of sanctions
- Establish a “peace dividend” for job creation, health care, education, housing, and other vital social needs
- Increased support for US veterans of the Iraq war, and
- No so-called “preventive” war against Iran or any other nation

www.declarationofpeace.org

###