

Resistance Against The Olympic Winter Games in Canada Solidarity And Unity In Opposing The 2010 Olympics February

Olympics Resistance Network The Olympics Resistance Network is based in Vancouver, Coast Salish Territories and exists as a space to coordinate anti-colonial and anti-capitalist efforts against the 2010 Games. Our organizing is based on the recognition that the Olympics is taking place on unceded Native land, and exists to create a movement for all anti-capitalist, Indigenous, anti-poverty, labour, migrant justice, housing, environmental justice, civil libertarian, anti-war, and anti-colonial activists to join forces. We come together on the basis of anti-oppression principles and with a respect for diversity of tactics. In addition to building ongoing educational and resistance efforts, we are working towards a convergence between February 10th-15th 2010, based on the call by the Indigenous Peoples Gathering in Senora, Mexico to boycott the Games.



We recognize that we, the Olympics Resistance Network, represent part of a wider movement opposing the 2010 Olympics. Therefore this statement aims to encourage solidarity and unity amongst the diverse groups, communities, and movements who are opposed to and/or critical of the 2010 Winter Olympics. The negative effects of the upcoming 2010 Winter Games are already quite clear:

- ✦ Expansion of sport tourism and resource extraction on Indigenous lands. There are over \$5 billion worth of resort plans since the Olympic bid, despite significant grassroots Indigenous opposition for example around Kamloops and Mount Currie. According to the Native Youth Movement, "The Olympics opens up our land, our sacred sites, and our medicine grounds to big corporations, but we want them to know that our land is not for sale."

- ✦ Increasing homelessness and gentrification of poor neighbourhoods especially Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. It is projected that the number of homeless in Vancouver will triple from 1000 homeless people since the Olympic bid in 2003 to over 3200 people by 2010. According to a report by the Geneva-based Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, the Olympic Games have displaced more than two million people around the world over the last 20 years.

- ✦ Unprecedented destruction of the environment. This includes massive deforestation in the Callaghan Valley to build the Whistler Olympic Center, clearcuts of Cypress Mountain which is a designated 2010 venue location; massive sand and gravel mining operations to build construction materials; and the destruction of Eagleridge Bluffs due to the Sea-to-Sky

Highway construction. In 2007, 71-year old Pacheedaht elder Harriet Nahanee and 78-year old environmentalist Betty Krawczyk were two of the arrestees at a blockade opposing construction at Eagleridge Bluffs. Harriet Nahanee contracted pneumonia at the Surrey Pre-Trial Center. She died a few days later, while hospitalized, on Feb. 24, 2007.

- ✦ More privatization of public services and ballooning public debt. The total cost for 2010 and related construction will be close to \$6 billion, with Olympic venues alone costing over \$4.5 billion. For example, taxpayers are on the hook for \$875 million for the 2010 Olympic Athletes Village's construction costs alone.

- ✦ Union busting through imposed contracts and vulnerable working conditions especially for migrant labour. There are an estimated 3,000-5,000 temporary migrant and undocumented workers in the Olympics-fuelled and speculation-driven construction industry that are prone to hyper-exploitation and are vulnerable given their lack of full legal status.

- ✦ Increased funding (up to \$1 billion) for the police, military, and border control

agents in the name of so-called national security. Sociologist David Lyon has dubbed Vancouver 2010 "the Surveillance Games" since security operations will include over 13,000 RCMP, military & other security personnel as well as joint US-Canada military & North American Aerospace Defence Command operations.

- ✦ Criminalization of the poor: Former Mayor Sam Sullivan has written "I believe we have a tremendous opportunity to use the upcoming 2010 Games as a catalyst to [solve public disorder problems]." Plans to "cleanse" the city's core of the poor include increased funding for private security initiatives such as the Downtown Ambassadors; passing of the Safe Streets Act which prohibits sitting or lying down on city sidewalks; banning dumpsters from the downtown core; and more.

Given this devastating reality, we are aware that there is wide-spread opposition to the 2010 Winter Olympics. This ranges from those who are opposing the negative impacts of the Games to those who seek to boycott the Games; from those who desire to raise public awareness about the Games to those who choose to engage in direct ac-

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