REJECT U.S. WAR,
MAKE PUERTO RICO A ZONE OF PEACE



Overview

I. Background & Context

For more than five centuries, the Americas have been pillaged by colonial empires, their violence reflected in the genocide of our people, the occupation and destruction of our lands, and sustained military campaigns designed to destabilize and undermine the revolutionary movements born in our region. Today, the United States maintains hundreds of military installations throughout the Western Hemisphere, with permanent access to our lands and waters to project its dominance over Our Americas. In January of 2014, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), declared that the Americas must be respected as a Zone of Peace.

However, U.S. imperialism continues to prop up right-wing governments that align with U.S. interests - making it difficult for regional states to achieve the goal of making Our Americas a Zone of Peace. As a result, the Zone of Peace Campaign seeks to establish a coordinated, militant, mass movement to expel the forces of Western imperialism from our region.

The Zone of Peace Campaign was launched in 2023 by a Popular Steering Committee led by the Black Alliance for Peace and key endorsing organizations across the Americas. The campaign's core demands are:

1. **Dismantle SOUTHCOM** Shut down the 76 U.S. military bases and installations in the region.
2. **End U.S./NATO militarism in the Americas**. End U.S./NATO military exercises; close foreign military bases, installations, and enclaves; and withdraw foreign occupation troops.
3. **Disband U.S.-sponsored state terrorist training facilities**. Shutter the "Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation" (WHINSEC)—formerly the School of the Americas—in Fort Benning, Georgia, United States, and terminate U.S.—as well as foreign—training of police forces.
4. **Oppose military intervention in Haiti**. Support the people(s)-centered movement for democracy and self-determination.
5. **Return Guantánamo to Cuba** and end colonialism in the Americas. The U.S. must give back to the Cuban people and their government the territory it illegally occupies. The U.S. and European states must end their colonial occupations of lands and peoples in the Americas, including Puerto Rico, the Malvinas, Martinique, and others.

6. **End imperialist sanctions and unilateral coercive measures**. Sanctions are war. End illegal sanctions, blockades, and unilateral coercive measures against regional states and peoples, including all economic warfare and lawfare, and recognize their sovereignty.

The Role of Diaspora Pa'lante Collective

The Zone of Peace Campaign is an Americas-wide project to demilitarize the Western Hemisphere. In addition to regional coordination and action, participating organizations are tasked with developing the campaign according to their national context and conditions. In addition to serving on the campaign's Popular Steering Committee, DPC is localizing the campaign by applying the Zone of Peace framework specifically to the decolonization of Puerto Rico and the expulsion of the U.S. military from the Puerto Rican archipelago.

Demands

1) Independence and Self-Determination for Puerto Rico

- The immediate end of Puerto Rico's status as a colony of the United States.
- Recognition of Puerto Rico as a sovereign nation with complete economic and political autonomy.
- The removal of U.S. military bases, infrastructure, and personnel from Puerto Rico.
- The cleanup of contaminated lands and waters impacted by military activity.
- An end to military exercises and training operations in the Americas.

2) Demilitarize Our Schools, Neighborhoods, and Public Institutions

- The removal of all agencies and industries committing violence against our communities, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).
- The removal of military recruitment programs from schools and public institutions.
- The divestment of public institutions and local economies from the military-industrial complex.

3) End Economic Coercion and Dependency

- The repeal of PROMESA, the Jones Act, and other means of economic warfare imposed upon Puerto Rico.
- An end to austerity measures that reinforce economic dependency and displacement.
- The re-allocation of public resources from militarization toward housing, healthcare, education, and community development.

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Campaign Materials

General Information: I Have Questions and Need Grounding	
Historical Documents	- CELAC 2014 Declaration - BAP Zone of Peace Declaration - Launch of Zone of Peace in D.C. - Press Statements - BAP US/NATO Out of Our Americas Orientation
Resources	- Map of U.S. Militarization in Our Americas - Zone of Peace Anti-Militarization Cards

Outreach Materials: I Need Materials to Give Out and Urge Others to Join	
When to use: Flyering at Events	
One Pagers	- Zone of Peace One-Pager - U.S. Out of Everywhere Black Background - U.S. Out of Everywhere White Background
Pamphlets	- U.S. Out of Everywhere in English and Spanish - P.R. and VZ Booklet English - P.R. and VZ Booklet SPA

Communications Materials: I Need To Uplift the Message	
When to use:	
Central Messaging	- Make Our Americas a Zone of Peace! (One-Pager) - Building a People(s)-Centered Zone of Peace in the Americas, #1 - Building a People(s)-Centered Zone of Peace in the Americas, #2 - Building a Zone of Peace in the Americas (Declaration) - Talking Points - Zone of Peace - Make Our Americas a Zone of Peace! (Pamphlet)
Press Conference Template	- Press Conference Template

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Political Education

DPC members can utilize and adapt the following template for in-person teach-ins related to the Zone of Peace Campaign.

MAKE OUR AMERICAS A ZONE OF PEACE!

Goal: Attendees will learn about the historical and contemporary context informing DPC's Zone of Peace campaign, and learn of tangible pathways to participate in the advancement of the campaign.

- **Determine location**: Find a venue that is free to use and easy to access for your target audience. Consider meeting rooms inside public libraries, schools, churches, publicly-owned buildings, gymnasiums, auditoriums, parks, etc.
- **Outreach strategy**: How will you promote your event and confirm the number of attendees?
    - Flyers posted in your area
    - Email blasts to lists of organizations you would like to collaborate with
    - Mass text messages
    - For your announcements, remember to include a phone number and an email address so you can be contacted with any questions.
- **Sign-in sheet**: Print out a sign-in sheet to build a list of attendees, which can be used for membership recruitment and promotion of future DPC events. Identify someone within your group to ensure names, email addresses, and phone numbers are obtained.

SESSION OUTLINE

- **Intros**: (5 minutes)
  If your group is small enough, facilitator(s) and attendees can share their name, pronouns, organizational affiliations, how you heard about this teach-in, what you hope to take away, etc.
    - **Introduce DPC and our mission** (< 1 minute)
- **Open Discussion**: What does a "zone of peace" mean to you? (5 minutes)
- **Grounding:** (15 minutes)
    - **Watch**: What Is SOUTHCOM?
    - **Read:** U.S. Out of Puerto Rico! Make Our Americas a Zone of Peace!
- **Campaign Overview**: (30 minutes)
    - **Watch:** The Puerto Ricans Who Fought the U.S. Navy and Won
    - **Present**: Slide deck summarizing campaign demands, DPC's approach, and entry points for joining DPC & advancing the campaign.

- **Open Discussion**: (30 minutes)
    - How do war industries, the U.S. military, and militarized law enforcement appear in our city and state? Where are they located? If we don't know, how can we find out?
    - What strategies and tactics can we use to oppose these forces in our region?
    - How can we effectively bridge the gap between local action and International solidarity? What more can we do to raise the banner of Independence for Puerto Rico?
- **Next Steps** (5 minutes)
    - Suggest a planning meeting or neighborhood assembly in the near future for community members to develop a concrete plan of action to advance the campaign.
    - Get commitments to join the Diaspora Pa'lante Collective
        - www.diasporapalantecollective.org/contact-volunteer

- **Within a week, debrief with fellow organizers**:
    - What worked? What didn't work? What opportunities did we seize upon?
    - What opportunities did we not take advantage of? How can we build upon this work? Which groups can we collaborate with further?
    - Email strategies, tactics, a group photo, and reflection notes to diasporapalantecollective@gmail.com.
    - Tag DPC on social media with your photo.

- **Follow up**:
    - Send a message to attendees and/or collaborators, thanking them for being a part of the teach-in and providing them with a way to continue the work.

General Outline

Introductions
Grounding
Overview of the Campaign
Connecting the Campaign to Puerto Rico
Connecting the Campaign to Your City/State
Open Discussion
Action Items/Next Steps
Conclude

From Strategy to Action

Once you've developed a strategy informing your approach to the campaign, your tactics are the actions you take to move the needle and achieve your objectives. Effective tactics **apply pressure, build leaders, and build power**. Prevent stagnancy by utilizing tactics that lead to sustainable momentum and measurable advancement.



Tactics

Tactics should be determined based on their ability to advance specific objectives. No single tactic in isolation is of greater value than any other, nor should it be relied upon as a matter of habit. Depending on your goal (e.g. political education, base-building, media coverage, economic disruption, etc.), the tactic you utilize must be carefully chosen to ensure the greatest chance of success.

I. Examples of Actions:
    1. Wheatpasting
        a) How to Wheatpaste
    2. Banner Drop
        a) Creating Banners
        b) How to do a Banner Drop
    3. Play/Drama
        a) Theater of the Oppressed
    4. Film Screening
        a) Earth's Greatest Enemy
        b) Kings of Paradise: The Vieques Case
    5. Petition
        a) Can be strategically utilized as a tool for political education, community outreach, and campaign growth
    6. Bird-Dogging
        a) How to Bird Dog
    7. Press Conference
        a) Arranging a Press Conference
    8. Canvassing
        a) 5 Steps of an Organizing Conversation
        b) Organizing Conversation Guide
    9. Community Forum
        a) How to Organize a Popular Assembly
    10. Street Rally
        a) Rally Toolkit (Template)
    11. Direct Action
        a) Direct Action Manual
        b) Blockades: A Short Guide to Getting in the Way
        c) Sit-In

Action Planning

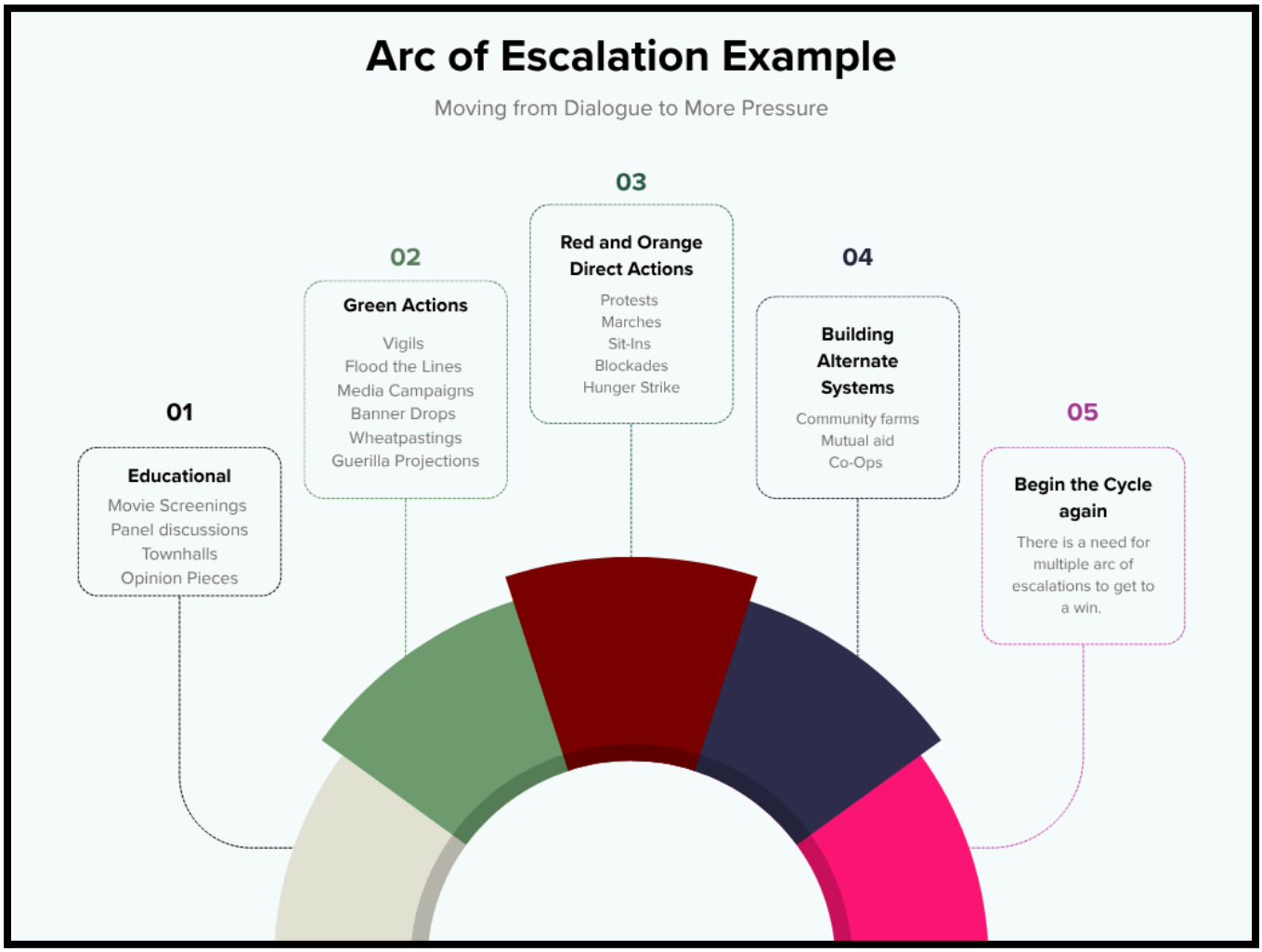
While thinking about which tactics will best suit your campaign goals, there are certain things you must consider:

- **Impact:**
  - Reach: What type of reach will your action have?
    Will you reach hundreds of people, or is there a select group you specifically want to target?
    - Are you inviting the media to the event? Is there someone responsible for promoting your action on social media?
    - Who is your audience for this tactic, and is this the best way to move them?
    - What is the plan for turnout? How are you getting people to come to your action?
  - Disruptiveness: How disruptive will your tactic be?
  - Leadership: Are you building other leaders with these tactics? Are you investing in the leadership of others in the chapter, cluster, or coalition?
    - Investing in a person's leadership can look like having a person lead chants, do a one-on-one interview with the media, lead planning meetings, or trainings, etc.
- **Capacity:**
  - How many people do you need for this tactic?
  - Do you need legal support? If so, who are your allies?
  - Do you have bail support or other financial aspects prepared?
    Are they even necessary?
  - Materials: Do you have one-pagers, pamphlets, banners, props, or other physical materials ready to go?
  - Do you have:
    - Assigned roles
    - Someone who has scouted out the location
    - The intended duration of the action
    - Security measures in place
      - Conversations regarding digital safety, etc.
- **Message:**
  - Do you have a clear message? Have you identified spokespeople who can deliver the message?
    - It is always best to have at least one person who is trained on the campaign and messaging.

- **Culture:**
    - Does your tactic center culture and art?
        - Artivism is a way to weave a thread between the people affected and the solutions presented. Ways to incorporate artivism into your tactics include music, art, plays, and chants in other languages.

What Is An Arc of Escalation, and What Can It Look Like?

An arc of escalation is a strategic progression from dialogue to direct action, such as civil disobedience.



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What Are My Rights During Actions?

Check out this resource from The National Lawyers' Guild.
This is not legal advice, but it is extensive and can help you and others prepare.

What are my rights at:

- Street Protests
    - Key Things to Know:
        - You don't need a permit to protest breaking news.
        - Your rights are strongest in what are known as "traditional public forums," such as streets, sidewalks, and parks. You also likely have the right to speak out on other public property, like plazas in front of government buildings, as long as you are not blocking access to the government building.
        - Private property owners can set rules for speech on their property.
        - You can record anything that is happening in plain sight. However, check whether your state has any HALO Laws, like Florida.

Digital Safety During Actions

Keep yourself and others safe during direct actions. We have a responsibility to care for each other, and that includes making sure your phone and other electronics are as safe as they can be.

Check out this activist checklist for digital safety.

Don't want to read through everything? Here's a mini-checklist.

- ☐ Take off any biometrics. No FaceID, no thumbprints.
- ☐ Disable location services. Take it further than just going on airplane mode, your GPS will stay on if you just leave it on airplane mode.
- ☐ Keep your phone updated to the latest software
- ☐ Use Signal for coordination
- ☐ Hide message previews
- ☐ Disable Siri, Bluetooth, and Wi-Fi
- ☐ Enable two-factor authentication (they're annoying, but necessary)