

Converge on Fort Benning: Nov. 18-20, 2011

What: Rally and nonviolent direct action to close the SOA

When: November 18-20, 2011

Where: Ft. Benning, Georgia

Why: The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation/WHINSEC (formerly the School of the Americas (SOA), is an army combat school that trains Latin American soldiers and officers. SOA graduates have committed atrocities including massacres of entire communities, assassinations, rapes, torture and “disappearances” in almost all of the countries of Latin America. Through the efforts of SOA Watch, Venezuela, Argentina, Uruguay, Costa Rica and Bolivia no longer send troops to the SOA/WHINSEC. Nevertheless, SOA/WHINSEC continues to train soldiers from a number of countries including Colombia, Peru, El Salvador and Chile. The struggle to close the School of the Americas and end the US militarization of our hemisphere continues. As we return to take our message of justice and peace to the doors of the School of the Assassins, we must continue to build our movement, in our communities and across borders, in order to return with renewed strength and dedication.

In April, following SOA Days of Action in Washington, DC, Congressman Jim McGovern's office began to circulate a Congressional Sign-On letter ([view a copy here](#)) among the House of Representatives which asks President Obama to issue an executive order to close the SOA/WHINSEC. This is one of many efforts that SOA Watch has employed to close the training school that has so many links to human rights violations across the hemisphere, and one of many efforts to curtail oppressive U.S. foreign policy in the Americas. Over the summer, we are asking our grassroots activists to engage in lobbying their Representatives to sign on to the letter to President Obama (a [Dear Colleague letter](#) is simultaneously being sent out to members of Congress from Rep. McGovern's office, encouraging them to sign on). **Our goal is to get a critical mass of Congressional signers in order to make a strong impression on President Obama.**

Who: Students from various high schools, university students and concerned adults.

How: The St. Louis Inter-Faith Committee on Latin America (IFCLA) has arranged for buses and lodging for St. Louis community members who would like to travel to Ft. Benning, GA for the annual nonviolent vigil and demonstration.

Details: Departure date: Friday, November 18

Buses will leave by 6:00pm from the World Community Center (WCC) parking lot (438 N. Skinker – east side of street half way between FPParkway and Delmar), and will arrive back at the WCC between **1-2am on Monday, November 21.**

Saturday night: La Quinta Inn, 3201 Macon Rd, Columbus, GA 31906 (706-568-1740)

Accommodations: 4 to a room (2 to a room and king rooms available at extra cost).

For more information about the SOA, visit SOA Watch web site at www.soaw.org & www.soaw.org/presente

Costs: \$165 per person for 2/room; \$150 per person for 4/room.

Deadline: The seats on the bus and rooms in the hotel are on a first come, first served basis, so the sooner the better. **Registration deadline: October 14; ALL Money/release forms/rooming list due at that time.**

- For more info/to ask for scholarship aid: call IFCLA 314-721-2977 or email ifcla@ifcla.net.
- IFCLA has speakers and films to help you prepare for your participation in the vigil.

- I/we would like to travel to Ft. Benning, GA with IFCLA to help close the SOA.
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- Enclosed is my check (make check payable to IFCLA) for \$_____.
- _____ One night _____ 4/room _____ 2/room
- **Schools/large groups please send ONE check per school/group) All participants need to fill out registration and release forms. Schools should send rooming lists by Oct. 14**
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- **Enclosed is my donation for scholarships for those who cannot afford to go \$_____**

(please print legibly) **send to IFCLA/438 N. Skinker/St. Louis, MO 63130**

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

email: _____

Affiliation/School: _____

Traveling with (for non-school people) to arrange roommates: _____

This is my first time to go to the SOA I have gone _____ times