

The National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum

Statement of Pacifism and Non-Violence

NAPAWF opposes war and all forms of violence. As a feminist and social justice organization, we believe that war, militarization and violence oppresses our entire international community, and particularly exacerbates the gender and racial inequalities experienced by Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women and other women of color, here and globally.

During wars or conflicts, women and children bear a strikingly heavy burden. In recent conflicts, women and children were the most vulnerable and blameless of victims – victims of rape and torture; used as human shields; and killed by errant bombs as they slept, shopped for food in street markets, or walked to school. Victims of war suffer unspeakable human costs. In addition to living in fear and mourning lives lost during the conflict, the survivors must struggle to exist in politically and economically destabilized countries, where lawlessness and anarchy abound, and where the infrastructure for basic necessities – food, shelter, water, electricity, sewage, hospitals, and schools – have been destroyed.

Many Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have experienced the physical, social and economic destruction of war and military occupation – from the Japanese internment during WWII to the uprooting of communities, villages and families during and following the Vietnam War. The AAPI immigrant and refugee communities know all too well that war tears apart families, livelihoods, deep-rooted cultures and homeland countries.

We support efforts to combat terrorism but not at the expense of eroding our civil liberties and targeting members of our communities through racial profiling, indefinite detainment and deportations, particularly South Asians and those of Middle Eastern descent.

Finally, AAPI women at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder -- where hunger, illness, sweatshop labor, exposure to hazardous chemicals and involuntary servitude are everyday realities -- are most impacted by the crucial resources that are diverted to fund this country's military machine and the billions of dollars it has taken to fight the War on Iraq. Simultaneously, our communities are also experiencing the effects of massive state budget deficits and loss of resources necessary to live beyond poverty.

NAPAWF's mission is to forge a progressive movement for the social and economic justice and the political empowerment of AAPI women and girls. We are committed to this mission, and find ourselves now more than ever committed to the cause of promoting an end to violence. Though the War on Iraq has ended, we stand firm in our hopes that our Administration will pursue more peaceful means to resolving future conflicts. We hope as a member or supporter you will join our efforts.