

Before You Come. . . AND After you Leave

An Organizing Timeline

As you prepare to join thousands of fellow SOA Watchers for the November 16-18, 2007 Vigil to Close the SOA/ WHINSEC, we know that there is a lot to do to get ready! Below is an outline of some of the many things to keep in mind as you are organizing in solidarity with the people of Latin America to close the SOA/ WHINSEC and to change US foreign policy. The contents of the outline are very general; tailor the information for your area and group.



To Do in the Summer and September

Promote the trip – Advertise the November Vigil and invite others to join you.

Transportation – It's never too early to start thinking about how you and your group will be getting to Columbus, Georgia! Many bus and van rental companies become booked several months in advance. Call to reserve the vehicle that is right for your group. Consider organizing a bus from your area. Contact SOA Watch to post ride information at info@soaw.org.

Sponsor a *Close the SOA!* Event – Show an SOA dvd/video (See the Resource List at <http://www.soaw.org/new/sub.php?id=2>). Invite an SOA Watch former Prisoner of Conscience (visit www.soaw.org to see if one is in your area) or someone who has attended the Vigil before to speak on the SOA/ WHINSEC. Find information on organizing an event at <http://www.soaw.org/new/article.php?id=1048>.

Sponsor a local Nonviolence Training – Schedule a training between June and early November to prepare your group for attending a demonstration and direct action. If you would like to be connected with a local trainer or to invite a national trainer to your area, please contact Joanne Sheehan at wrlne@peoplepc.com.

Housing – Make hotel, motel or camping arrangements for your group in Columbus, Georgia. Check- <http://www.soaw.org/article.php?id=1295> - for housing suggestions.

To Do in October

Presentation to local church congregation, community organization, union or labor council – Let people in your community know that you and others are going to the Vigil action in Georgia, and tell them why. Invite the group to travel with you to Georgia, to contact Congress about the SOA/ WHINSEC or to support your group's efforts.

To Do in November



Contact your local media – *You are news!* In the first week of November, contact a reporter or an editor at your local paper or television station. Introduce yourself and let him or her know of your group's plans for traveling to the Vigil. Mention any events you may have in your community leading up to your departure, and ask what information she or he might need from you. Consider inviting a reporter to accompany your group on your trip to Georgia.

In the week before your group leaves for Columbus, send a press advisory to your local media outlets; then make a call to each newsroom to make sure they received it. Immediately after the vigil, be sure to follow up with reporters you've spoken to, and, if the newspaper isn't writing its own story, ask them to run the Associated Press or Reuters story about the demonstration. Post your before, during and after news to your local Indymedia site (visit www.indymedia.org to find the site nearest your community).

To Do Beyond November . . .

Follow-up – Be sure to check our webpage or contact our Legislative Coordinator in the DC office for updated information on our Legislative campaign and information on contacting your Representative or Senator. Contact your local news outlets with the outcome of the weekend.

De-brief and form an SOA Watch local group – Meet with your local group and evaluate how the trip went, commit to next steps and begin to implement those steps. ***Use the momentum of your November Vigil trip to promote the next SOA Watch event, the Spring Lobby Days to Close the SOA!***