



for immediate release  
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## ***[Your town]* Residents to Join Thousands in Georgia Calling for Closure of Controversial Training Facility for Latin Americans**

### *Rally to Demand "Zero Tolerance for Torture" and Closure of U.S. Army's School of the Americas*

*[Your Town]* – This weekend residents of the *[your town]* community will join thousands from across the nation at Fort Benning, Georgia to demand a dramatic shift in U.S. foreign policy and the closure of the controversial U.S. Army's School of the Americas (SOA).

"Despite a shocking human rights record, this school continues to operate with US taxpayer money," said *[local person going to Georgia]*. "Closing the SOA would send a strong human rights message to Latin America and the world."

The SOA, now called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, made headlines in 1996 when the Pentagon released training manuals used at the school that advocated torture, extortion and execution. Despite this admission and hundreds of documented human rights abuses connected to soldiers trained at the school, no independent investigation into the facility has ever taken place.

Support for the School of the Americas, now called the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, continues to erode. In May, Costa Rican President Oscar Arias announced that his government would cease to send police to be trained at the School. The Central American nation is the fourth country after Argentina, Uruguay and Venezuela to sever ties with the school, citing its history of human rights abuses.

*[Person's name]* and *[number of others traveling]* others will leave for Georgia on *[date of departure]*. *[Sentence about your local group]*. Last November, 22,000 people gathered at the gates of Ft. Benning to call for the closure of the school, the largest demonstration yet in a 17-year history of opposition to the school.

*["Insert quote here connecting struggle to close the SOA with a local struggle in your community," person going to Georgia.] OR [One or two closing sentences about your group: how many years you've traveled, how big you are, who's in it, etc].*

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