

## Mission Statement

Witness for Peace is a politically independent, grassroots organization. We are people committed to nonviolence and led by faith and conscience. Our mission is to support peace, justice and sustainable economies in the Americas by changing US policies and corporate practices which contribute to poverty and oppression in Latin America and the Caribbean. We stand with people who seek justice. Through international programs and US grassroots activism, Witness for Peace works to transform US public opinion, government policy, and corporate practices. Some WFP focus areas:

- US military policy
- Unfair trade agreements
- The Cuban embargo
- Debt relief for impoverished nations
- Reform of the international financial institutions (IMF, World Bank, etc)
- US Army School of the Americas
- Sweatshops and labor rights
- Corporate responsibility
- Environmental justice

Visit our interactive website today! Get resources and news about what Witness for Peace is doing in your area! Find more information about what is highlighted in this brochure!

[www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org)

## History of WFP

Witness for Peace was founded in 1983 by people of faith and conscience, who, in response to US funding of the Contra War, traveled to Nicaragua to see firsthand the devastating human effects of the US-sponsored war. Over the course of the 1980s, thousands of concerned citizens traveled to Nicaragua with Witness for Peace. In the US, activists across the country organized events to resist Reagan's war on Central America, which may have averted an all-out US invasion of Nicaragua, and certainly contributed greatly to the effort to cut off US military aid to the contras. Formed during the war years, this 16,000-member US grassroots network represents the backbone of Witness for Peace to this day.

In the 1990s, as the Central American wars drew to an end, Witness for Peace kept its focus on US policy. Though the United States stopped funding warfare, the policies of the US government, multinational corporations, and international financial institutions continued practices hostile to basic human rights. Since 1990, Witness for Peace has focused on many of the destructive effects of economic globalization and the policies of international institutions that lead the new war against the poor.

Over the years, Witness for Peace has expanded its program work, and we have maintained offices in many of the nations in the Americas' most affected by US policy. Currently, Witness for Peace has an office and permanent presence in Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua and Colombia. Over the years, the organization has also maintained a presence in Guatemala and Haiti. Witness for Peace is committed to answering the call to witness whenever US policy threatens peace, life and sustainable development in the Americas.

Though the issues we address have evolved over the years, the character of our organization remains the same. We come from a wide range of faiths and backgrounds but are united by a common commitment to changing US government policies and corporate practices that contribute to poverty and injustice in Latin America and the Caribbean.



**Witness for Peace**  
Acción Permanente por la Paz

[www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org)

## Resources Available from WFP

These are some of our publications and resources available for sale. Please see [www.witnessforpeace.org](http://www.witnessforpeace.org) or call (202) 588-1471 for more information and a complete, updated list of our offerings.

### A Bankrupt Future: The Human Cost of Nicaragua's Debt

An introductory, but comprehensive look at the complex realities of the debt crisis in Nicaragua. This document provides information about the roots of the global debt crisis and the draconian solutions of the international donors. This document looks at both the debt crisis in general, and the crisis in in Nicaragua specifically. (\$10)

### Behind the Seams: Maquilas and Development in Nicaragua

This document describes the immense obstacles facing textile assembly workers in Nicaragua and elsewhere in the "developing" world who strive to organize for a living wage and safe and humane working conditions. (\$7.50)

### Breaking the Cycle of Military and Economic Violence

This groundbreaking report takes a comprehensive look at the connections between military and economic violence in Latin America. (\$10)

### The Economic Way of the Cross/El Via Crucis Economico

(bilingual edition) A book for progressive religious groups on how to relate Jesus's way of the cross to the sufferings of those who live and work under the crushing weight of global economic injustice. (\$7.50)

### Hemisphere for Sale: The Epidemic of Unfair Trade in the Americas

Using Mexico's experience with NAFTA as a primary example of what happens when rich and poor nations engage in unmitigated "free trade" agreements, this document tells a cautionary tale of the perils of unfair trade relationships. (\$10)

### Honoring Bishop Gerardi's Legacy: Demanding Economic Justice in Guatemala

A guide to economic justice issues in post-war Guatemala, seen through the lens of Bishop Juan Gerardi's legacy of active peacemaking. This document serves as a primer and an action tool for activists concerned about a lasting peace in Guatemala. (\$4.00)

### Loosen the Noose on Cuba

Stop the Embargo- Bumper stickers (\$1.50 each or 10 for \$3.00), Mouse pads (\$7 each), and Action packets (free)

### Witness for Peace Solidarity in Action T-Shirt

These eye-catching blue t-shirts display the WFP's "solidarity in action" theme on the front and our name in Spanish on the back. Union made and printed. 100% cotton, royal blue (\$15 each).

## Membership

Join Witness for Peace! Become part of WFP's network of over 16,000 concerned citizens and help take a stand against US policies and corporate practices that lead to oppression, violence, and poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Witness for Peace is a membership organization. Basic membership costs \$35 per year. This includes a subscription to the Witness for Peace quarterly newsletter, electronic subscription to our updates and informational mailings on regional events. Donors of \$250 or more receive special informational mailings, a complimentary copy of all Witness for Peace publications, and annual issues of the Witness for Peace reading packets.

### Send me information on:

- Joining the International Teams
- Joining a Delegation
- Getting involved in local actions
- Other WFP programs
- The Call-A-Week Campaign

### Join Now! Order Now!

Complete and enclose check, money order, or credit card information to: 1229 15th St, NW Washington, DC 20005

<b>Membership:</b>			
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_____ \$250	_____ \$500	_____ other	

<b>Publications</b>			
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Clip and return to WFP, 1229 15th St NW, Washington DC 20005

# International Programs

Since 1983, Witness for Peace has worked together with our brothers and sisters in Latin America and the Caribbean, struggling for peace and justice. Because we maintain local offices and relationships throughout the Americas, we are in a unique position to document the impacts of US policies on our neighbors, to listen to their perspectives and stories, and to raise their voice to the press and policymakers. Currently, the organization maintains offices and a permanent presence in Mexico, Nicaragua, Cuba, and Colombia. From these four international offices, Witness for Peace is able to address the impacts of US policies, corporate practices, and the policies of powerful international financial organizations on the people of Latin America.

## In Colombia

US policy toward Colombia has recently become much more militarized and destructive through strong support of the counter-narcotic and counter-insurgency warplan entitled "Plan Colombia." The US is heavily funding both the Colombian security forces and counter-narcotic efforts including aerial eradication of drug crops. Both of these policies have escalated an already devastating war, and have exacerbated the current refugee and public health crises. The Colombian security forces – among the most abusive in the hemisphere – are directly linked to the terrorist paramilitary organizations, and aerial eradication efforts repeatedly spray toxic chemicals on rural Colombian communities. To advocate for a US policy that instead promotes peace and life, WFP gathers evidence and hosts delegations of US citizens. Currently, Witness for Peace team members travel directly to the war zones and fumigated crop areas to document the reality of destruction that comes as a result of US policy.

## In Cuba

Witness for Peace examines the human, social and environmental impacts of the US' 40+ year embargo. Delegates and International Team members gather firsthand evidence of the devastating effects of this punishing US policy, looking at such areas as health care, education, housing, public welfare, agriculture, and industrial development. WFP presence is sponsored by the Martin Luther King Center for Nonviolence, a faith-based NGO in Havana. Witness for Peace Delegations are licensed through the US Treasury Department. Travel to Cuba with WFP is fully legal for US citizens.

## In Mexico

Witness for Peace examines the unbalanced and unfair relationship between the US and its impoverished neighbor to the south. In particular, our International Team documents the human, social, and environmental impacts of a pro-corporate trade policy and an unmanageable debt. Mexico provides a unique case study of how the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) affected a "less-developed" nation and offers implications for the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas. The Mexico program works in various parts of the country, examining the issues from different perspectives, including Mexico City, maquila factories in the south and north, and the popular uprisings in Chiapas and other southern states.

## In Nicaragua

Witness for Peace staff, International Team members, and delegates work together with our partners in Nicaragua to address the multitude of challenges that Nicaragua faces in the struggle for sustainable development. From corporate responsibility and labor rights to the international debt crisis to environmental justice, the Witness for Peace international team works on issues of structural economic violence in Nicaragua. Team members work closely with maquila laborers who are struggling for their right to work in a dignified workplace and with NGO representatives from across the social spectrum on issues of debt relief and alternatives to structural adjustment.

# Around the US

Since 1983, Witness for Peace members, delegates and activists have been organizing for change on a local and national level. Many have seen and heard from the people who suffer the consequences of flawed US policies and corporate practices, and they feel compelled to work for change. Others are drawn by a commitment to nonviolence and to working in partnership with our brothers and sisters in Latin America. All are called to witness.

**YOU** are the strongest resource for affecting change. Witness for Peace is a grassroots organization – with over 16,000 active members nationwide – and with a presence in communities around the country. Through local actions, national mobilizations and international campaigns, we put pressure on the US government, US corporations, and International Financial Institutions (like the World Bank and IMF), which are funded by US taxpayers. As US citizens, we feel it is our right and responsibility to demand policies and practices that promote human rights and justice for all peoples throughout the Americas. PLEASE JOIN US!

## Get Involved!

1. Join a delegation to Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua or elsewhere. See more in the adjoining section.
2. Get involved with local WFP efforts. There are actions, gatherings, presentations and demonstrations happening all the time. Add your voice to the growing chorus of people standing in solidarity with our partners in Latin America demanding economic justice. Contact your WFP Regional Coordinator for a list of activities in your area.
3. Make a Call-A-Week! By joining the Call-A-Week campaign, you will receive a weekly action alert on urgent topics where your call can make a difference. Alerts include issue background, talking points, and call-in details. Sign up by sending an email to [witness@witnessforpeace.org](mailto:witness@witnessforpeace.org).
4. Become a member of Witness for Peace- For a \$35/yr basic membership, you will receive the WFP quarterly newsletter and periodic campaign updates. You will also be helping to support WFP's program work to change US policies toward Latin America and the Caribbean.



## The Witness for Peace International Team: A 2-Year Service Volunteer Program

Join the Witness for Peace International Team as a two-year volunteer in one of our program sites (currently Mexico, Cuba, Nicaragua and Colombia). Team members design and plan participatory experiential educational programs that help visiting groups of US citizens understand the impact of globalization, corporate practices and US economic and military policies toward these countries. To prepare for those programs, the Team makes contacts with community and church leaders, civil society groups, labor and environmental groups and other NGOs. Team members also investigate current events in the countries as they relate to global economics and US policies and write articles, short reports and develop educational publications that put a "human face" on the impact of these policies in these countries.

Candidates must be US citizens, at least 21 years old, fluent in Spanish, experienced in living and working abroad, have a Bachelors degree or equivalent experience, with excellent communication and interpersonal skills and a demonstrated commitment to nonviolence.

## Regional Coordinators

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# Delegations

## Socially Responsible Travel to Colombia, Cuba, Mexico and Nicaragua

Since 1983, over 10,000 people have traveled to Latin America and the Caribbean with Witness for Peace. These individuals have borne witness to, and challenged, unjust US economic, corporate, and military policies. Delegations are the cornerstone of Witness for Peace programs, providing transformative experiences that contribute to cross-border understanding and lasting bonds of solidarity.

WFP delegations provide a unique opportunity to experience life in the developing world. Our trips combine international travel and education with the struggle for peace, economic justice, and alternative development. On a delegation, you will not only meet amazing people, you will gain the skills and the tools necessary to work for positive social change upon your return to the United States.

With Witness for Peace you do not travel as a tourist, you stand in solidarity with the people. All Witness for Peace delegations are part of a cross-border strategy designed to bolster the growing movement for peace and economic justice. Delegates with Witness for Peace travel to Latin America to learn and to witness, to listen and to accompany, to be in solidarity and to work for positive change.

Typical delegations include:

- homestays with local families
- daily meetings with non-governmental and civic organizations (women's groups, indigenous organizations, union leaders, environmental organizations, health workers, educators, etc.)
- discussions with US government representatives
- meetings with foreign officials
- travel to rural and urban areas
- work projects
- intense cultural immersion
- strategy and commitment sessions to plan stateside follow-up work

Connections with grassroots organizations, community leaders, human rights workers, and local families have given delegates a unique insight into the lives and struggles of the people in the global South. This awareness inspires people to advocate for human and economic rights. Follow-up your delegation experience with targeted activism and work in your community.

For more information about the Witness for Peace delegations program, clip and send in the box in this brochure, send an email to [delegations@witnessforpeace.org](mailto:delegations@witnessforpeace.org), or go online at [www.witnessforpeace.org/travel](http://www.witnessforpeace.org/travel)

*"I don't know where to put Witness for Peace on any political spectrum. It's just human beings acting decently."*

– Noam Chomsky

*"Witness for Peace is providing a leadership role in the long and hard struggle to expose and change the economic policies that are making the poor of the world even poorer."*

– Fr. Miguel d'Escoto, President, FUNDECI, Nicaragua

