

Edinburgh Stop the War Coalition are off to Glasgow this weekend

✘ Edinburgh supporters of the Stop the War Coalition will be joining the national demonstration in Glasgow on Saturday 23rd July. “The date was chosen because of the growing severity of repression in Syria and the continuing and deepening bombing campaign in Libya,” explained Pete Cannell of [Edinburgh STW](#), “and it follows several rallies in Glasgow organised with the support of the Syrian community in Scotland.”

The rally will be supported by Scottish Palestinian Forum, Scotland for Syria, Scottish Palestinian Forum and Scottish Jews for a Just Peace. Renowned folk singer Roy Bailey will sing at the event with David Ferrard.

“In Edinburgh in 2011 we have organised several well supported vigils in support of the democracy movements in the middle east. Currently we are focusing primarily on a campaign to get the troops home from Afghanistan. This protest is a chance for supporters of human rights and democracy to come together from across Scotland,” said Pete.

“Last week Forceswatch organised a meeting at the Quaker Meeting House to consider ways to challenge the military presence in schools and colleges with U.S. speaker, Oskar Castro. The UK armed forces visit thousands of schools each year. They offer school presentation teams, youth teams, ‘careers advisors’ and lessons plans. The Government is suggesting the expansion of cadet forces within state schools to encourage the military ‘spirit’ and that ex-soldiers mentor youngsters in schools. While there are claims that school involvement is not about recruiting young people, the Ministry

of Defence has itself stated that visits to educational establishments are a 'powerful tool for facilitating recruitment'. Should the armed forces be given access to children within education?"

The Edinburgh coalition was founded at the same time as the UK group in September 2001 and has campaigned without a break since then. The primary objectives of the campaign remain the same: to oppose the military interventions by the British Government in the name of 'the war on terror' and to stand out against the demonisation of the Muslim community in the UK.

"To this end," added Pete, "we have organised numerous demonstrations, lobbies, vigils and public meetings which have engaged literally tens of thousands of people in Edinburgh and millions across the country.

Over Iraq we argued that Blair and his government lied about the reasons for intervention – the Chilcott inquiry has confirmed that on every ground we were correct. Similarly with Afghanistan the claims that intervention was about democracy and women's rights have been proved hollow.

Other events in the pipeline include a public meeting on the evening of 10th September on 10 years of the occupation of Afghanistan and on 11th November Greg Muttitt, who has written a new book on the occupation of Iraq and the importance of oil, will be speaking.

There is also a Military Families Against War group in Edinburgh organised by the mother of a British soldier so if you have family in Iraq or Afghanistan or have lost someone close to you in either war please get in touch," said Pete.

"We are asking people who want to travel through to Glasgow by train together to be at Waverley by 10.30 on Saturday. And if anyone can help by distributing leaflets or posters phone 07791913316 and we'll endeavour to get them to you."