

# Template for thematic groups

## (max 3 pages)

**Name of theme: Migration, military conflict, occupation and state repression**

**Key problems to be addressed (please limit to 5)**

- Migration-related health issues: In so many ways, problems related to migration are causing public health problems. There is the forced migration, like the millions of people that have fled war in the Middle East. There's the attempts of Europe, Australia and the US to keep migrants from the South out through the militarisation of border control, the organisation of offshore refugee camps, but also through the general climate of marginalisation, racism and xenophobia whipped up by their political class. There is also the massive migration of Rohingya and the violence they have to endure as an example of forced migration. But apart from that, we also think of the migrant workers who chose to work abroad to sustain their families; and so many other instances of migrants who have to live and work in precarious conditions.
- Military intervention and occupation: For the Palestinian people, living under occupation means facing daily violence and restrictions of movement and living in an economic wasteland because of the crisis and blockade. The consequences are disproportionately felt by women who might even give birth at the checkpoints. The people of Gaza are even targeted by bombardments. There are the ongoing wars in Yemen and Syria and other wars of intervention. Also the situation in the Western Sahara is a cause of concern.
- State repression: The increasing repression, including violence, arrest, torture and assassinations of health workers, human rights defenders and others who assert the rights of the people in many countries like, for example, the Philippines, Turkey, Latin America. There are also massive internal displacement of indigenous peoples and peasants brought about by (para-)military operations protecting large foreign mining operations and foreign-funded dam constructions
- The military and security industry as a public health threat: Capitalist greed for profit has created an industry that preys on war and fear. It is a continuous cause of conflict and therefore human suffering while it also spreads fear which makes it a cause of mental health problems as well. Besides, the military is also one of the world's worst environmental polluters and carbon emitters.

**Briefly about causation of these problems**

The root causes have to be sought in the capitalist exploitation of labor and natural resources. It is the insatiable thirst for profit that is causing war and insecurity on a global scale but also poverty and environmental degradation. All of these are uprooting many people so they leave their place and opt for migration. In fact, it is the imperialist aspirations of Europe and the US that are creating the conditions that are provoking massive movements of people across the world. They are destabilising whole countries through economic policies, political intervention, arms trade, drug traffic and unbridled resource extraction.

Growing inequalities are both a cause and a result of worsening contradictions and conflicts. On the one hand, they will lead to protest and opposition, which in turn are met with state repression. On the other hand, the powers that be are fomenting contradictions between the people, setting up groups of people against others to divert attention from the real causes of poverty and ill health.

**Broad objectives of PHM's intervention in this area**

The PHM wants to:

- show solidarity with the people who are suffering in these circumstances;

- help comrades in the struggle who are facing repression;
- pressure international organisations to advocate for equitable policies, conflict resolution, peace building, disarmament.
- Influence government policies in favor of safe and free movement of people; stop military R&d with tax payers money
- ensure that migrants' and refugees' health rights are upheld
- push for more a social agenda in regional integration processes
- expose the real situation
- the UN system should take up their role and increase their accountability (including UNRWA)

## Action commitments

- **Networking (collaborating together, building solidarity, listening across difference)**

- Build stronger linkages with the peace movement, organisations working for denuclearisation and disarmament.
- Build stronger linkages with movements of migrants and with their solidarity movements
- Communication exchange of information,

- **Awareness raising (publications, campaigns, etc.)**

- Ensure better visibility of these issues; communications
- Campaign for the right to health of migrants and refugees
- Campaign for divestment (stop funding with public money) from military R&D and the military industry in general
- Campaign for safe passage of refugees

- **Direct action (demonstrations, boycott, etc.)**

- Join the BDS campaign and the campaign for military embargo on Israel; assert the right to return and to end the occupation (Palestine).
- Coordinated action day (for example human rights day)

- **Capacity building**

- **Research (including collecting/learning from people's experience, testimonies, etc.)**

- Fact finding missions, solidarity missions

- **Policy analysis and advocacy**

- **Other**

- Europe-MENA meeting March meeting