



# Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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October 19, 2004

Missile Defense Agency BMDS PEIS  
c/o ICF Consulting  
9300 Lee Highway  
Fairfax, VA 22031

Dear Friends,

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) submits the following initial comment on the current draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement of the Missile Defense Agency.

WILPF is a ninety year old non-governmental organization that has worked tirelessly since its inception to put an end to war. WILPF has supported the development of international institutions and international law, and non-violent methods of conflict resolution that together can facilitate the co-existence of diverse nations and peoples on this planet.

We hope the comments of ourselves, and of others who oppose the militarization of space, will be considered seriously, and that both environmental concerns and concerns for the future of our human race will lead to suspension of this ill-advised and destabilizing missile defense program.

The MDA draft PEIS seeks to answer to detrimental environmental effects of three alternative development plans for Ballistic Missile Defense. We have found the answers disturbingly incomplete. We have also carefully considered all three alternatives presented and have concluded that it would be dangerous – and indeed disastrous -- for the future of our nation to proceed with any of them. It is impossible to comment on all the details in the 701 page document in this short space, but we expect to submit several supplementary comment papers on a few of the many issues of deep concern to us.

First, we are convinced that Alternative 2, which includes development of space based interceptors, is completely unacceptable. We will submit additional comments on both the issue of debris from experiments with space based weapons and on the development of laser weapons. We have other concerns re Alternative 2 that you will perhaps argue are beyond the scope of this PEIS, but that makes them no less important. One is the creation of orbiting debris in space which will remain there

as a threat to future space exploration. The second of these is that space based laser interceptors will be a first step toward the more ambitious program of space weaponization already developed by the Pentagon and the Space Command, and presented in detail in the November, 2003 *U.S. Air Force Transformation Flight Plan*. This is a direction in which no civilized nation should proceed!

We believe that Alternative 1, which does not include space based weapons, and Alternative 3, which is unclear on this point, are also unacceptable, even from a solely environmental viewpoint. We are concerned about the adverse effects in all of the resource areas discussed in the MDA PEIS including hazardous waste, legal restraints, decommissioning of the weapons systems, destruction of the ozone layer, global warming and rocket fuel pollution of our water and river systems. We are preparing supplemental comments on at least some of these concerns.

We also wonder why this expensive and almost certainly unachievable missile defense program has been developed in the first place. It does not answer to probable threats to our national security in the present or in the coming decade. It will do nothing to prevent terrorist attacks, and there is now no hostile country or group with the capability of firing inter-continental ballistic missiles at the United States. Missile defense seems rather to be preparation for future confrontation with the only two countries really capable of threatening our current military domination or challenging us with nuclear attack. Neither of them – China or Russia – is currently an enemy, but this aggressive program may well push them into organizing allies and forces against our own threat of global – and planetary -- domination.

With this in mind, we will submit an additional comment on what we consider to be the only feasible alternative approach to protection of our land and peoples from intercontinental ballistic missiles, from the ravages of nuclear, biological or chemical warfare – or, indeed, from either attacks by small bands of terrorists or from what we have come to call “conventional warfare” (e.g. our own recent “shock and awe” attack on Baghdad).

This Alternative 4 would include a return to the United Nations disarmament treaty process (which the current Administration is regrettably blocking), and assumption of a lead role in the continual development of enforceable and universally applied international law consistent with both the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The United States would re-enter that process as the most powerful and most militarized nation in the world and would have no substantial military rivals. This is a rare and critical moment in history and the choice is ours: the United States can lead the way toward a world freed from war with sustainable development and human rights for all – or this nation can drag the human race backward with it into a world ruled by war, military domination and the threat (or use) of weapons more powerful than any known before.

For us in the WILPF there is no question about which route is preferable. We are convinced that continuing with any of these three BMD programs will make the step-by-step process of nuclear disarmament impossible, make war on earth and in space inevitable, and seriously threaten human existence and the entire fragile web of life on our unique and precious planet. We urge all those in the Pentagon, the Missile Defense Agency and in the aerospace corporations to join us in choosing life over death and step-by-step peace building over further destruction of this planet and its fragile web of life.

Sincerely,

Sandy Silver, President  
United States Section