



14 June 2022

UN Human Rights Council, 50th regular session of the Human Rights Council (13 June – 8 July 2022)

Item 2: Interactive dialogue on the annual report of the High Commissioner

JOINT STATEMENT ON MILITARY SPENDING

I speak on behalf of the Friends World Committee for Consultation – Quakers (FWCC) - and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

We welcome the joint statement delivered by Panama on behalf of a group of States. Ever-increasing public spending on militarisation, including of border controls, diverts much-needed resources away from public services, climate action, development aid, and from responding effectively to the socio-economic impacts of the COVID19 pandemic.

World military spending continued to grow in 2021, with two trillion dollars collectively spent on militarism - an all-time high. Military spending contributes to the increased militarisation of society, legitimising and perpetuating the use of violence as a response to global challenges at the expense of social welfare, thus exacerbating poverty, inequalities and environmental degradation.

Meanwhile, many States continue to fuel the arms trade for economic and political reasons, in violation of their international obligations including under human rights, international humanitarian law (IHL), and arms control and disarmament treaties and frameworks. This is compounded by the lack of transparency, democratic oversight and accountability of businesses in the arms sector, which have largely relegated their human rights responsibilities to States.

We call on all States to:

- urgently reduce military spending and reallocate resources towards human security based on human rights for all.
- strengthen public services and live up to their obligations to respect, protect and fulfill human rights, including the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and to their SDG commitments, including SDG 16 - as a matter of social justice and of conflict prevention.
- undertake participatory, gender-responsive human rights impacts assessments of any military spending; while ensuring mandatory due diligence requirements for the arms sector based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).
- invest in gender-responsive budgeting and promote and ensure effective public participation and oversight in national budgeting processes.

END

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