

COP27



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
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Yannick Glemarec, Executive Director
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Re: Global Appeal to Reduce Military Spending and Re-Allocate to Climate Financing

Dear Executive Director Glemarec,

In the lead up to the Conference of the Parties (COP) 27 in Egypt, our organizations, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the International Peace Bureau and World BEYOND War, are jointly writing this open letter to you about our concerns related to military expenditures in the context of climate crisis. We are worried that rising military expenditures are derailing progress on climate financing required to achieve the Paris Agreement and limit global mean temperature to 1.5C.



We are asking the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to study and report on the possibility of reducing and re-allocating military spending as a source of climate finance. Increasing military expenditures impede countries' capacity to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis. We are also worried that the ongoing wars and hostilities between countries are undermining global cooperation and state capacity needed to prevent catastrophic climate change.

Last year, global military spending rose to \$2.1 trillion (USD), according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). The five largest military spenders are the United States, China, India, United Kingdom and Russia. In 2021, the U.S. spent \$801 billion on its military, which accounted for 40% of world military expenditures and more than the next nine countries combined. This year, the Biden administration has further increased U.S. military spending to a record high of \$840 billion. By contrast the U.S. budget for the Environmental Protection Agency, which is responsible for climate change policy, is only \$9.5 billion. The British government plans to double military spending to £100 billion by 2030. Worse still, the British government announced that it would cut funding from climate change and foreign aid to spend more on military aid to Ukraine. Germany also announced a €100 billion boost to its military spending. In the latest federal budget, Canada ramped up its defence budget currently at \$35 billion per year by \$8 billion over the next five years. Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) are increasing military spending to meet the 2% GDP target. NATO's latest defence expenditures report shows that military spending for its thirty member countries has risen dramatically over the past 7 years from \$896 billion to \$1.1 trillion USD per year, which is 52% of world military spending (Chart 1). This increase is more than \$211 billion per year, which is double the climate financing pledge. Moreover, the military is one of the most carbon-intensive institutions.

Chart 1

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total NATO Military Spending (US dollars)	\$896 billion	\$911 billion	\$918 billion	\$972 billion	\$1,031 billion	\$1,107 billion

Source: Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2013-2020), March 2021.

In 2009 at COP 15 in Copenhagen, wealthy Western countries made a commitment to establish an annual fund of \$100 billion by 2020 to help developing countries adapt to the climate crisis, but they failed to meet this target. Last October, wealthy Western countries led by Canada and Germany published a Climate Finance Delivery Plan claiming that it will take until 2023 to meet their commitment to mobilize \$100 billion every year through the GCF to assist poorer nations deal with the climate crisis. Developing countries are the least responsible for the crisis, but are the hardest hit by climate-induced extreme weather events and urgently need adequate financing for adaptation and loss and damage.

At COP 26 in Glasgow, rich countries agreed to double their funding for adaptation, but they have failed to do so and they failed to agree on funding for loss and damage. We know that the GCF



launched its campaign for a second replenishment from countries in August of this year. This funding is crucial for climate resilience and a just transition that is gender-responsive. Instead of marshalling resources for climate justice, this past year, Western countries have rapidly increased public spending for weapons and war. We are requesting that the GCF raise the issue of military spending as a source of funding for climate financing facilities. We note that a search of the GCF web site finds no information on military spending.

In September, during the General Debate at the United Nations, the leaders of many countries denounced military spending and made the connection to the climate crisis. The Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands Manasseh Sogavare stated, “Sadly more resources are spent on wars than on combatting climate change, this is extremely unfortunate.” The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica, Arnaldo André-Tinoco further declared,

It is inconceivable that while millions of people are waiting for vaccines, medicines or food to save their lives, the richest countries continue to prioritize their resources in armaments at the expense of people's well-being, climate, health and equitable recovery. In 2021, global military spending continued to increase for the seventh consecutive year to reach the highest figure we have ever seen in history. Costa Rica today reiterates its call for a gradual and sustained reduction in military spending. For the more weapons we produce, the more will escape even our best efforts at management and control. It is about prioritizing the lives and wellbeing of people and the planet over the profits to be made from weapons and war.

It should be noted the Costa Rica abolished its military in 1949 so it does not waste any money on soldiers, weapons and war exercises. This path of demilitarization over the past 70 years has led Costa Rica to become a leader in decarbonization and biodiversity conversation. For example, last year at COP 26, Costa Rica launched the “Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance” and can run most of its electricity on renewable energy.

Last year, scientists Dr. Carlo Rovelli and Dr. Matteo Smerlak co-founded the Global Peace Dividend Initiative. They argued in their recent article “A Small Cut in World Military Spending Could Help Fund Climate, Health and Poverty Solutions” published in *Scientific American* that countries should redirect some of the \$2 trillion “wasted every year in the global arms race” to the GCF and other development funds. Peace and the reduction and re-allocation of military spending to climate financing are crucial to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. We call on the GCF to use your office to raise awareness about the adverse impacts of military expenditures and to appeal to states to reduce and re-allocate these unproductive expenditures to climate finance.

Finally, we believe that peace, disarmament and demilitarization are vital to mitigation, transformational adaptation, and climate justice. We would welcome an opportunity to meet with you virtually and we can be reached through the WILPF office's contact information above. WILPF will also be sending a delegation to COP 27 and we would be pleased to meet with you in-person



in Egypt. More information about our organizations and sources for the information in our letter are enclosed. We look forward to your reply. Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Rees
Secretary General
Women's International League
for Peace and Freedom

Sean Conner
Executive Director
International Peace Bureau

David Swanson
Co-Founder and Executive
Director
World BEYOND War

ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATIONS:

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF): WILPF is a membership-based organization that works through feminist principles, in solidarity and partnership with sister activists, networks, coalitions, platforms, and civil society organizations. WILPF has member Sections and Groups in over 40 countries and partners around the world and our headquarters is based in Geneva. Our vision is of a world of permanent peace built on feminist foundations of freedom, justice, nonviolence, human rights, and equality for all, where people, the planet, and all its other inhabitants coexist and flourish in harmony. WILPF has a disarmament program, Reaching Critical Will based in New York: <https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/> More information on WILPF: www.wilpf.org

International Peace Bureau (IPB): The International Peace Bureau is dedicated to the vision of a World Without War. Our current main programme centres on Disarmament for Sustainable Development and within this, our focus is mainly on the reallocation of military expenditure. We believe that by reducing funding for the military sector, significant amounts of money could be released for social projects, domestically or abroad, which could lead to the fulfillment of real human needs and the protection of the environment. At the same time, we support a range of disarmament campaigns and supply data on the economic dimensions of weapons and conflicts. Our campaigning work on nuclear disarmament began already in the 1980s. Our 300 member organisations in 70 countries, together with individual members, form a global network, bringing together knowledge and campaigning experience in a common cause. We link experts and advocates working on similar issues in order to build strong civil society movements. A decade ago, the IPB launched a global campaign on military spending: <https://www.ipb.org/global-campaign-on-military-spending/> calling for a reduction and re-allocation to urgent social and environmental needs. More information: www.ipb.org



World BEYOND War (WBW): World BEYOND War is a global nonviolent movement to end war and establish a just and sustainable peace. We aim to create awareness of popular support for ending war and to further develop that support. We work to advance the idea of not just preventing any particular war but abolishing the entire institution. We strive to replace a culture of war with one of peace in which nonviolent means of conflict resolution take the place of bloodshed. World BEYOND War was begun January 1, 2014. We have chapters and affiliates around the world. WBW has launched a global petition “COP27: Stop Excluding Military Pollution from Climate Agreement”: <https://worldbeyondwar.org/cop27/> More information about WBW can be found here: <https://worldbeyondwar.org/>

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