

# SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE:

Climate change, climate finance & the global military

Briefing

September 2024



## MILITARY SPENDING & EMISSIONS: HIDDEN DRIVERS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

The global military is a major driver of climate change. It is exempt from compulsory reporting its greenhouse gas emissions to the IPCC/UNFCCC despite some countries' militaries being among the largest institutional consumers of fossil fuels in the world. This is a scandal that needs exposing.

These emissions are a direct result of runaway global military spending since the former cannot happen without the latter. Combined, they ensure that all human development is harmed in myriad ways.

As a matter of urgency we need this issue taken up and addressed by the many stakeholders this serious matter falls to for action – from civil society to governments to international institutions, especially the UN.

Last but not least, policy-makers concerned with *Green New Deal* economic thinking (in the UK, Europe, the USA and elsewhere) must take account of the links between these closely linked issues: military spending & emissions, the just green transition and sustainable human safety. We need *peaceful, green*, prosperity.

***Summit of the Future: Climate Change, Climate Finance & the Global Military*** is the third in Tipping Point North South's ***United Nations and the Global Military*** series of reports and briefings that offer fresh new thinking for progressively converting military spending into funding for development and climate finance, strengthening sustainable human safety, and averting climate catastrophe under the United Nations framework.

Tipping Point North South's work on global military spending and emissions is supported by The Network for Social Change, Marmot Trust, the Ratcliff Foundation and Jam Today under the project title *Transform Defence for Sustainable Human Safety*.

September 2024

Briefing written by Dr. Ho-Chih Lin and Deborah Burton.

Tipping Point North South is a 'for the benefit of community' co-operative, supporting and initiating creative, campaign-driven projects that advance the global justice agenda.

### CONTACT US

T: +44 (0) 20 8847 0377

E: [info@tippingpointnorthsouth.org](mailto:info@tippingpointnorthsouth.org)

W: <https://tippingpointnorthsouth.org/> and <https://transformdefence.org/>

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### WHY THIS BRIEFING NOW

In December 2020, to mark the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Paris Agreement, Tipping Point North South announced its latest initiative: *Transform Defence for Sustainable Human Safety*. It launched with the publication of two reports: '*Indefensible: The true cost of the global military to our climate and human security*' and '*Global Military Spending, Sustainable Human Safety and Value for Money*'.<sup>1</sup> This work grew out of TPNS's Five Percent Proposal<sup>2</sup> that argued runaway global military spending was every bit as structurally relevant to international development issues of power imbalance, extreme poverty, displacement and ecological breakdown as debt cancellation, trade, tax and climate justice. The terrible combined human impact of conflict and climate change on many millions of people in the global south, inevitably meant this work would lead to asking critical questions about how all this impacts on the activity and role of the United Nations (UN).

This briefing follows on from our 2022 report '*Reset for the 21st century: The Global Military and the United Nations*'.<sup>3</sup> Since then, the wall-to-wall television coverage of the war in Ukraine and the genocide in Gaza has brought the issue of conflict and climate to the fore. As a result, civil society efforts to get these issues onto the agenda of the UNFCCC have made progress.

Also since 2022, the world has entered a new arms race and the issue of the potential use of tactical nuclear warheads has raised its ugly head again.

**This briefing marks the 79<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly and the Summit of the Future September 2024. Ever-rising military spending is an ever-increasing obstacle to progress on all UN development and climate agendas. In recognition of this, both the *Global week of action for climate finance and a fossil free future* (13-20 Sept)<sup>4</sup> and the *Global Week of Action for Peace and Climate Justice* (21-28 Sept)<sup>5</sup> call for runaway military spending as an urgent source to tap for climate finance.**

For all those attending the UN events of September 2024, '*Summit of the Future: Climate Change, Climate Finance & the Global Military*' not only explains the ways in which the global military (especially the top 20 military spenders and arms sellers) impact on both climate and climate finance, but offers up proposals on how we can reverse this state of affairs at this critical turning-point of time in human affairs.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/publication/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/the-five-percent-proposal/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/publication/the-global-military-and-un/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://payupandphaseout.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://climatemilitarism.org/weekofaction/>



## UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY & THE SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE

There are many points at which the issue of military spending directly or indirectly intersects with the topics covered at the Summit for the Future and the UN General Debate:

### SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE

22-23 SEPTEMBER

Heads of State and Government will gather at UN Headquarters in New York on 22-23 September 2024 to address the critical challenges and gaps in global governance exposed by recent global shocks. This Summit aims to reaffirm commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Charter while enhancing cooperation and laying the foundations for a reinvigorated multilateral system. The Summit will result in a negotiated Pact for the Future, an action-oriented document aimed to **bolster global cooperation** and adapt to current challenges effectively for the benefit of all and for future generations.

### PEACEFUL FUTURES FOR ALL – ACTION DAY

21 SEPTEMBER

In addition, the UN Secretary-General is convening the Summit of the Future Action Days on 20 and 21 September 2024 to generate additional opportunities for the engagement of all actors. The 21 September will see debates on the theme **Peaceful Futures for All**.

### 79TH SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY GENERAL DEBATE

24-30 SEPTEMBER

World leaders will gather to engage in the annual high-level General Debate under the theme, "Leaving no one behind: acting together for **the advancement of peace**, sustainable development and human dignity for present and future generations". Heads of State and Government and ministers will explore solutions to intertwined global challenges to advance peace, security, and sustainable development.

### HIGH-LEVEL MEETING: INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE TOTAL ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

26 SEPTEMBER

Achieving **global nuclear disarmament is the highest disarmament priority of the United Nations**. It was the subject of the General Assembly's first resolution in 1946, which established the Atomic Energy Commission (dissolved in 1952), with a mandate to make specific proposals for the control of nuclear energy and the elimination of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction. Today around 12,512 nuclear weapons remain. **The**



**nine countries possessing such weapons have well-funded, long-term plans to modernize and expand their nuclear arsenals.** In addition, no nuclear disarmament negotiations are currently underway.<sup>6</sup>

## CLIMATE CHANGE, CLIMATE FINANCE & THE GLOBAL MILITARY

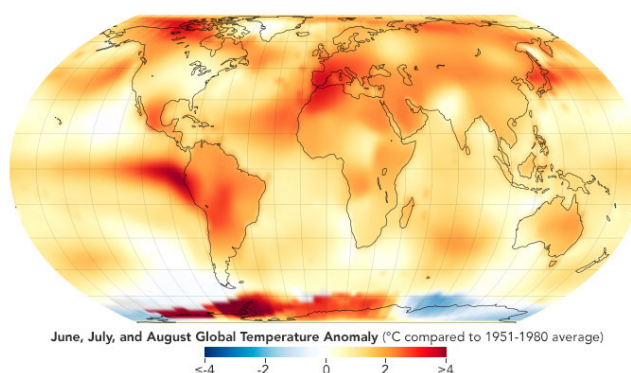
The United Nations has long recognised the harm done to people and the planet by the mis-spent billions and trillions of dollars allocated by governments to the world's militaries, right up to the present day.

*First — we need peace. Conflicts in Gaza, Sudan, Ukraine and beyond are causing a devastating loss of life. And they are diverting political attention and scarce resources from the urgent work of ending poverty and averting climate catastrophe. It's time to silence the guns in line with the UN Charter and international law. Stop spending on war and destruction. Invest in peace and development instead.*

*15 July 2024 Secretary-General's remarks at the Opening of the Ministerial Segment of the High-Level Political Forum Delivered by the Deputy Secretary-General<sup>7</sup>*

Civil society calls for excess military spending as a source to tap for climate finance are gaining more and more attention. This report offers up background, context, information and practical proposals on this matter, coupled with a proposal to address arms industry excess profiteering.

## 2. THE BIG PICTURE



Summer 2023 was the hottest on record. (NASA Earth Observatory image by Lauren Dauphin)

No human, economic or environmental transformation is complete without parallel progressive foreign policy and defence transformation. We are in the midst of the sixth mass extinction. Yet the most socially and economically damaging threat to our collective global security/safety – climate change – is but a poor relation when set alongside other ‘conventional’ threats. The foreign and defence policies of nations around the world – especially the top 20 nations which allocate enormous sums to defence spending – are preoccupied with a plethora of adversarial threats on land, air, sea and space; nuclear weapons; cyber weaponry and AI. National budget allocations reflect this: From battlefield to nuclear wasteland; from outer space to deepest ocean. From pilotless planes to robot soldiers, it's all covered.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/observances/nuclear-weapons-elimination-day>

<sup>7</sup> <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sgsm22307.doc.htm>

Except it's not all covered.

A suite of other, equally (or more) devastating yet deeply 'unsexy' hard defence and security threats are left in the wings. The scale of climate emergency alone is unprecedented. More than 28 trillion tonnes of ice have disappeared from the surface of the Earth since 1994, contributing to sea level rises. To put this in context, "every centimetre of sea level rise means about a million people will be displaced from their low-lying homelands."<sup>8</sup> "If we did nothing at all to reduce emissions, we could get 5 metres of sea level rise just from Antarctica by 2200."<sup>9</sup>



Climate change, global health since the COVID-19 pandemic, and now war in Ukraine, genocide in Gaza, starvation in Sudan is laying bare the magnitude and depth of the desperate state we are in. As we try to develop transformative policies – at speed – that address all of these huge challenges, we must not (conveniently) forget to include foreign and defence policy-making since it is profoundly interlocked with all these other issues.

In truth, while nations have been busy declaring war/proxy war, cold or hot, on others, we have been led to this point: we have collectively declared war on ourselves and our planet. No F-35 will stop New York City, Alexandria, Shanghai, Amsterdam, Rio de Janeiro, Tokyo, Venice, Mumbai and London going under water; no nuclear warhead will solve India and Pakistan's disappearing water-table; no anti-terror AI will stop West Africa's growing desertification.

Every person, community, society, nation, region needs protection from aggressors and terrorists and it is the job of government to defend its citizens from such threats. These threats need to be in their place, proportionately, alongside much greater but entirely marginalised human security threats such as climate breakdown, pandemic and – we would also argue – deteriorating global inequality.

### 3. THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF RUNAWAY MILITARY EXPENDITURE AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY

#### TRILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO FOSSIL-FUEL RELIANT MILITARIES INSTEAD OF DELIVERING TRUE 'SAFETY' FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

*We know that rich nations found money for destructive activities. They have found money for wars. Money for genocide. They find money to subsidise the fossil fuel industry. And yet when developing countries who are bearing the worst of climate impacts and who are least responsible for the climate crisis, they cannot find the money to support these developing countries to take the actions they need.*

*Tasneem Essop, Executive Director, Climate Action Network, Bonn Climate Conference June 2024*

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/aug/23/earth-lost-28-trillion-tonnes-ice-30-years-global-warming>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/may/05/antarctica-ice-sheet-melting-global-heating-sea-level-rise-study>

In the face of immediate and combined human safety threats from climate emergency, pandemic, mass species extinction, conflict, poverty and inequality, the profoundly inadequate level of funding allocated to address these clear and present threats is plain for all to see. As we pour trillions into conventional military budgets, the time has come for urgent, evidence-based assessments of global military spending in relation to its efficacy in delivering sustainable human safety over the coming decades.

The Pentagon is but one of many leading defence agencies to categorise climate change as the major security threat of our time. However, it is primarily considered through the lens of militarisation, treating the issue as it would a traditional national security threat.<sup>10</sup> This is a woefully inadequate and unjust approach to dealing with consequences of climate breakdown.

On COVID, the UK and USA, for example, had categorised pandemic as a Tier One (highest-priority) security risk long before the COVID-19 pandemic – yet left their citizens utterly unprotected in the face of the coming crisis (after several countries, including China and Italy, were hit weeks or months earlier).<sup>11</sup> This resulted in more than one million unnecessary and fully preventable deaths by acute COVID and several millions more excess deaths from COVID.<sup>12</sup>

None of this comes near to what the global public should expect of their governments in times of unprecedented threats to human safety. The public is sorely lacking rigorous and widely shared evidence-based assessments of global military spending.

## TRILLIONS FOR MILITARY, NOT CLIMATE FINANCE

*We live in a time when climate hazards face off with vulnerabilities propelled by the expansionist socioeconomic system. This order is built on the relics of colonial extractivism operating behind military shields. Diversion of financial resources from building human resilience into military adventures is a key factor driving the multiple crises of political instability, indebtedness, climate breakdown, food insecurity, poverty, and human misery. It is a vacuous claim for rich nations, most of whom are members of NATO, to plead economic constraints as the reason for not meeting their climate finance obligations. It is clearly false when we see how much they commit to warfare. Wars kill people, extinguish biodiversity, and destroy the infrastructure that could otherwise provide safeguards in the face of extreme weather events. Warfare is an act of climate denial.*

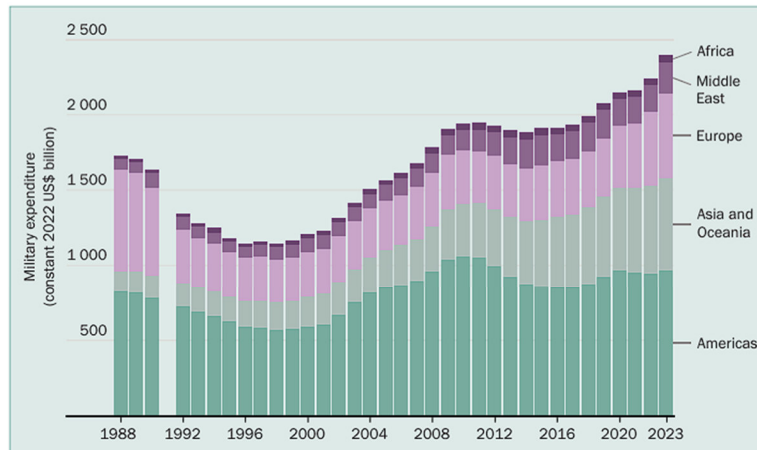
*Nnimmo Bassey, Nigerian environmental activist, author and poet. Director of Health of Mother Earth Foundation, former chair of Friends of the Earth International, and winner of the Right Livelihood Award. Foreword to the 'Climate Crossfire' report.<sup>13</sup>*

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.break-down.org/post/against-a-military-transition>

<sup>11</sup> <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/111/national-security-strategy-joint-committee/news/137998/government-failed-to-act-on-its-security-plans-for-a-pandemic/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>; <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-022-05522-2>

<sup>13</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/publication/climate-crossfire/>



World military expenditure, by region, 1988–2023

Note: The absence of data for the Soviet Union in 1991 means that no total can be calculated for that year.

Source: SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Apr. 2024.

### The hard truth is this: there *are* trillions for the big militaries but not climate finance.

Agreement on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance is mired in obfuscation and delay by the very nations historically responsible for the climate crisis and which have persistently failed to fulfil their legally binding climate finance pledges.

- The #PAYUP campaign has estimated that rich nations need to pay to developing countries a minimum of \$5 trillion per annum in public climate finance.<sup>14</sup>
- The wealthiest countries (Annex II) spend 30 times more on their militaries than on providing climate finance for the world's most vulnerable countries.<sup>15</sup>
- In 2023 the world spent \$2.4 trillion on their militaries.
- **If the current trend continues, between 2024 and 2030 we can expect to see more than \$17 trillion spent on the global military, around 55% of these trillion dollars will be spent by Annex II rich developed countries on their own militaries.**
- Value or money: the \$2 trillion lifetime cost of Lockheed Martin's F-35 fighter jets could have funded UN disaster risk reduction for the next 4,000 years or global biodiversity conservation at \$100 billion per annum for the next 20 years or WHO funding at \$2 billion per annum for the next 1,000 years.

TPNS Transform Defence's 2020 report '*Global military spending, sustainable human safety and value for money*' looked at various 'value for money' comparative examples, including the cost of the Lockheed Martin F-35 weapons system and its estimated global total lifetime cost of \$2

<sup>14</sup> <https://payupandphaseout.org/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/publication/climate-collateral-how-military-spending-accelerates-climate-breakdown/>



trillion.<sup>16</sup> That \$2 trillion could have funded any one of a number of critical agencies/activities below:

- Climate finance for 20 years;
- UN disaster response for the next 400 years;
- UN disaster risk reduction for the next 4,000 years;
- Global biodiversity conservation at \$100bn per annum for the next 20 years ;
- WHO funding at \$2bn per annum for the next 1,000 years;
- WHO's COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund for 2,963 years;
- Global pandemic surveillance and control at \$8bn per annum for the next 250 years;
- Money for 4 years to lift the poorest people in the world above extreme poverty (UBI for the 700 million poorest);
- UN peacekeeping operations at current \$5bn per annum for the next 444 years;
- UN peacekeeping at \$15bn per annum for the next 133 year.

In a 2018 study, it is estimated that if the UN had invested \$200 billion in peacekeeping operations with strong mandates during the period 2001–2013, major armed conflict would have been reduced by up to two-thirds (relative to a scenario with no peacekeeping operation) and 150,000 lives would have been saved. The actual budget over these 13 years was \$59 billion. The \$200 billion scenario is indeed a major increase on \$59 billion, but this larger commitment would decline over time as peacekeeping missions go on to significantly reduce current and future risk of conflict. The researchers conclude that “UN peacekeeping is clearly a cost-effective way of increasing global security.”<sup>17</sup>

## THE #PAYUP CAMPAIGN

A vast network of civil society groups from around the world are coming together to tell the governments of the Global North that they have a huge bill to pay to the Global South for their decades of inaction and broken promises when it comes to climate action. Their empty promises have also deepened the gross inequalities and injustices endured by communities, economies, and ecosystems across the Global South. It's time for the Global North to step up and accept its historical responsibility in the climate crisis.

### HOW MUCH IS OWED?

It is important to emphasise that the current climate debt is immense and incalculable. No amount of money can ever replace the lives and nature lost due to climate inaction and injustice.

<sup>16</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/publication/value-for-money/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/700203>

But it is clear – trillions are needed and fast. The World Resources Institute estimated in 2021 that \$5 trillion for annual climate finance is needed by 2030.<sup>18</sup>

The figure of \$5 trillion is also one that the #PAYUP campaign is demanding governments of the Global North provide per year to the Global South in public finance. Several studies from an array of organisations, including the International Energy Agency, the UN's Environment Programme, the London School of Economics, the World Bank, have said that between \$2.3 - \$10 trillion is needed to be paid each year by the Global North to the Global South. Another study, by ecological economist Andrew L. Fanning and anthropologist Jason Hickel, have calculated that even if the world takes urgent and sufficient action to limit warming to an average 1.5°C, fair reparations for the costs to the Global South caused by past decades of excessive pollution in the Global North, combined with projected escalating impacts, would come to \$192 trillion by 2050. Breaking that down and taking an average, the annual climate debt that wealthy countries need to pay to developing countries comes in at \$5 trillion.

Moreover, it says it must be revised upwards regularly as needed, and be considered as merely an initial payment, toward the much larger total climate debt that continues to mount.



## 4. CLIMATE BREAKDOWN: THE SIGNIFICANT ROLE OF THE FOSSIL-FUEL RELIANT GLOBAL MILITARY

### MILITARY EMISSIONS

Ever rising military spending contributes significantly to increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. It is incompatible with every climate target since the more spent on heavy-duty fossil-fuel hungry weaponry, the greater the military emissions.

- The global military carbon footprint was estimated to be 5.5% of total global emissions.<sup>19</sup>
- **If the world's militaries were a single country, they would have the fourth largest national carbon footprint in the world – greater than that of Russia.**
- This is more than the combined annual emissions of the 54 nations of the African continent.
- It is twice as much as emissions from civilian aviation.
- This estimate does not include conflict-related emissions.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/business/cop/world-needs-5-trillion-annual-climate-finance-by-2030-rapid-action-2021-10-28/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.sgr.org.uk/resources/how-big-are-global-military-carbon-emissions>

Until now, we have collectively and consistently ignored the massive yet unaccounted for responsibility of the world's militaries for climate change, from their day-to-day operational activities to the wars and conflicts of which they are part.

*"The contribution of military activities to the unprecedented series of environmental crises facing the world today has been largely overlooked and, to an extent, willfully ignored."*

Abeer Majid, *'The Impact of Militarism on the Environment'*<sup>20</sup>

Citing 'national security' as a reason, only a few countries submitted limited and inadequate data on military emissions to the UNFCCC in their annual GHG emissions inventories. The military/defence sector has also been excluded from any IPCC assessment so far.

### **BRINGING MILITARY EMISSIONS TO THE UNFCCC**

The war in Ukraine and Israel's genocidal war on Gaza has brought long overdue attention to this issue at UNFCCC climate meetings (Bonn and COP), attracting considerable global media coverage.

Civil society has been highly pro-active on this matter and wants to see (i) all nations to compulsory submit full GHG military emissions reporting to IPCC/UNFCCC (ii) all nations to include their militaries' and military technology industries in their NDC GHG emission reduction plans and targets (iii) the Subsidiary Body of Scientific and Technical Advice to elaborate rules for reporting of military and conflict-related emissions under the Paris Agreement in the context of the enhanced transparency framework (iv) the planned AR8 cycle IPCC Special Report on Cities to include the impacts of war and conflict on cities.

Finally, Article 2.1.(c) of the Paris Agreement obliges states to "making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development".

**On this basis, increased military spending undermines the mandate of Article 2.1.(c) and should therefore be progressively reduced.**



Lockheed Martin F-35A Lightning II. (Staff Sgt. Kaitlyn Ergish/Air Force)

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<sup>20</sup> *The Impact of Militarism on the Environment*, Abeer Majeed, 2004. [https://pgs.ca/wp-content/uploads/2007/11/militarism\\_environment\\_web.pdf](https://pgs.ca/wp-content/uploads/2007/11/militarism_environment_web.pdf)

## 5. MILITARY-OIL-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, WARS & ARMS INDUSTRY PROFITS VS THE CLIMATE

**Never-ending war and climate change are unholy bedfellows.** The war in Ukraine is making this clear as is Israel's destruction of Gaza. There was Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, Ethiopia and now Congo and Sudan. What of the uncalculated carbon burden of previous wars? WW1? WW2? Vietnam/Laos? And until we stop confrontational international politics and great power competition altogether, there will inevitably be more carbon intensive wars of scale in the future.

War needs oil. To enable and sustain the political space at home to both wage war and prevent war weariness, leading military powers conduct wars with air-power and aerial bombardment.<sup>21</sup>

**Bombs.** The US coalition dropped 4,000 bombs in Afghanistan in 2017 and more than 7,000 bombs in 2018.<sup>22</sup> The Saudi coalition carried out 19,000 airstrikes in Yemen between March 2015 and January 2019, dropping British and American made bombs.<sup>23</sup> Israel has dropped more bombs on Gaza in less than a year since October 2023 than were dropped on Dresden, Hamburg and London combined during WW2.<sup>24</sup> Two years into the ongoing Russian war in Ukraine has potentially caused 175 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e of military and conflict-related emissions; 45 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e of which were directly from the fossil-fuel consumption of the Russian military and to a lesser extent as well as the Ukrainian military.<sup>25</sup>

**Reconstruction** needs carbon intensive oil, steel and cement. Cement production is one of the largest industrial sources of GHG emissions in the world – estimated to contribute approximately 8% of total global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The World Bank's 2017 *Toll of War* report on the consequences of war in the 10 most-impacted Syrian cities estimated that nearly 900,000 housing units were destroyed in Syria. The cement required to rebuild these units will release approximately 22 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the massive task of clearing the debris before reconstruction can start will generate yet more GHGs.

The UN estimated that more than half of the total buildings in Gaza were damaged by Israeli intense and indiscriminate bombardment and that it would take 15 years to just clear 40 million tonnes of rubble.<sup>27</sup> The necessary post-war reconstruction would further release enormous amount of greenhouse gas emissions. It is estimated that just the first 120 days of Israeli genocide of Gaza potentially caused 61 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e, the majority of which from post-war construction activities.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> <https://turningpointmag.org/2024/07/03/the-three-dimensions-of-militarism-in-the-climate-crisis/>

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.afcent.af.mil/About/Airpower-Summaries/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://interactive.aljazeera.com/aje/2018/Saudi-Arabia-air-raids-on-Yemen/index.html> ; <http://yemendatapoint.org/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://english.almayadeen.net/news/politics/far-more-bombs-dropped-on-gaza-than-london--dresden--hamburg>

<sup>25</sup> <https://climatefocus.com/publications/climate-damage-russian-war-in-ukraine-24-months/>

<sup>26</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/publication/indefensible/>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/jan/09/emissions-gaza-israel-hamas-war-climate-change>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.qmul.ac.uk/media/news/2024/hss/new-study-reveals-substantial-carbon-emissions-from-the-ongoing-israel-gaza-conflict.html>

## THE ARMS INDUSTRY

*"The massacres caused by weapons happen in a deafening silence and away from everyone's sight... People, who want bread, not weapons, who struggle to move forward and seek peace, are unaware of how much public funds are allocated to armaments. And yet, they should know...Let's talk about this, let's write about this, so that the interests and benefits that drive the threads of wars are known."*

*Pope Francis, Christmas Message, December 2023*

**The top 100 arms companies accounted for \$592 billion in arms sales in 2021 (pre-Ukraine, pre-Gaza).** The top 20 arms companies alone account for two thirds of the total arms sales in the world and come from just a handful of countries: USA, China, Russia, UK, France and Italy.

- In the seven years to the 2030 target of keeping global heating below 1.5°C by cutting annual global GHG emissions by 45% from 2010 levels, the fossil-fuel-reliant global military will receive around \$17 trillion from their governments – a great deal of that will go, in turn, to the hugely profitable arms industry.
- The Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II, with a projected service life up to 2070 and partially (10%) built by Britain's BAE Systems, consume 60% higher jet fuels than previous generation fighter jet (for example, the F-16 consumes 3500 litres per flight hour).<sup>29</sup>
  - Drinks 5,600 litres fuel per flying hour
  - Lockheed Martin expected to sell more than 3,000 F-35s worldwide.
  - **Carbon emissions of F35 fighter jet per mission (28 Tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e) = One person's emissions (living in the West) over 2 years**

**HARDWARE & SERVICES** The global defence market size is more than half a trillion dollars (\$575bn in 2023).<sup>30</sup>

- The gas-guzzling Lockheed F35 Fighter jet (just completed, partially built in the UK and now being sold around the world) was projected to cost \$2 trillion in total (for purchases and maintenance) around the world over its expected lifetime – a massive public to private wealth transfer.
- The US accounts for 42% of all global arms exports, followed by France and Russia (11% each).<sup>31</sup>
- The top 5 U.S. defence contractors received \$150bn a year from the Pentagon. Lockheed Martin alone received \$75bn for federal contracts, more than the entire budget of the U.S. State Department.<sup>32</sup>

**WAR** "\$10,000 of stock evenly divided among America's top five defense contractors on September 18, 2001 – the day President George W. Bush signed the Authorization for Use of Military Force in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks – and faithfully reinvested all dividends,

<sup>29</sup> <https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/next-threat-stealth-f-35-global-warming-92931>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.thebusinessresearchcompany.com/report/defense-global-market-report>

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2024/sipri-fact-sheets/trends-international-arms-transfers-2023>

<sup>32</sup> [https://www.democracynow.org/2022/4/15/pentagon\\_russia\\_ukraine\\_800\\_million\\_arm](https://www.democracynow.org/2022/4/15/pentagon_russia_ukraine_800_million_arm)



it would now be worth \$97,295.” Much better return on investment (an ROI of nearly 900%) than if the exact same amount were invested in general economy, e.g. an S&P500 index fund.<sup>33</sup>

*“I make no apology for that, I think, again, recognizing, you know, we are there to defend democracy. And the fact is, eventually we will see some benefit in the business over time. Everything that’s being shipped into Ukraine today, of course, is coming out of stockpiles, either at DOD or from our NATO allies. And that’s all great news. Eventually we’ll have to replenish it, and we will see a benefit to the business over the next coming years.”*

Gregory Hayes, CEO of Raytheon<sup>34</sup>

## **RIISING MILITARY SPENDING DOES NOT DELIVER MORE HUMAN SECURITY: IT DOES THE OPPOSITE**

- Between 2010 and 2022, conflicts have almost doubled, from 30 in 2010 to 56 in 2022.<sup>35</sup>
- 74% of arms sales are made by the P5 members of the security council and the majority of their arms sales go to the global south.<sup>36</sup>
- Conflicts drive 80% of all humanitarian needs.<sup>37</sup>
- By 2030, at least half of the world’s poor people will be living in fragile and conflict-affected countries.<sup>38</sup>

These numbers do not take the contemporary and future impact of the climate emergency.

## **5. WAYS TO MOVE MILITARY SPENDING – AND ARMS INDUSTRY PROFITSS - TO CLIMATE FINANCE**

To reduce and redirect military spending is win-win for the climate, climate finance and human security. Even the IPCC Working Group III in its contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report (March 2023) explored such a reallocation as “(...) moderate reductions in military spending (which may involve conflict resolution and cross-country agreements on arms limitations) could free up considerable resources for the SDG agenda.

<sup>33</sup> <https://theintercept.com/2021/08/16/afghanistan-war-defense-stocks/>

<sup>34</sup> <https://hbr.org/2022/03/raytheon-ceo-gregory-hayes-how-ukraine-has-highlighted-gaps-in-us-defense-technologies>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.sipriyearbook.org/view/9780198890720/sipri-9780198890720-chapter-001.xml>

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2024/sipri-fact-sheets/trends-international-arms-transfers-2023>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/fragilityconflictviolence/brief/people-peace-prosperity>

<sup>38</sup> <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/844591582815510521/world-bank-group-strategy-for-fragility-conflict-and-violence-2020-2025v>

## Is \$5 trillion per year attainable?

The Global North's claim of insufficient resources for development and climate finance is fundamentally flawed and disingenuous. During the COVID-19 pandemic, these governments mobilized an astounding \$16 trillion in fiscal stimulus to support their economies.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, the G7 alone spent over \$1 trillion annually funding wars and conflicts globally.<sup>40</sup> This clearly demonstrates that the resources exist—they are just being allocated based on political will and priorities. If trillions can be found for pandemic relief and military expenditures, the same financial commitment must be made to address the existential threat of climate change.

## MILITARY SPENDING: ROUTES TO REDUCE AND REDIRECT

*The most vulnerable must not have to choose between fighting climate change and fighting poverty. They will have to do both. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities is non-negotiable. Threatening it goes against any basic notion of climate justice. This notion demands that financing and technology transfer obligations be fulfilled. It is unacceptable that the promise of 100 billion dollars a year made by the developed countries will not come to fruition while, in 2021 alone, military spending reached 2 trillion and 200 billion dollars.*

*Speech by President Lula at the First Session of the High-Level Segment for Heads of State and Government of COP 28*

(i) COP29 – COP of PEACE to call for redirection of military spending to climate finance.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom briefing 'Towards Climate Justice: Redistributing Military Spending to Climate Finance' calls for NCQG and cover text of the "COP of Peace" to include the redirection of military spending as a key way for developed countries to fulfil their public support obligation to developing countries.

(ii) Consider universal, equitable routes to reducing and redirecting military expenditure.

**'The Peace Dividend Campaign'** The Global Peace Dividend Initiative was started in 2021 by physicist Carlo Rovelli and draws inspiration from the Pugwash Conference, a society of scientists which played a role in convincing the Soviet and US governments to collaborate at the height of the cold war, by agreeing to destroy some 80–90% of their nuclear warheads.

Supported by over 50 Nobel Prize Laureates its aim is to catalyze an international agreement to jointly reduce military spending and redirect the huge savings to a global fund to fight planetary emergencies. It proposes to reduce military spending by 2 per cent per year, in all countries. The 2 per cent cuts over five years, starting in 2025, would liberate an estimated \$1.3 trillion and could be redirected to a global fund to tackle the climate crisis and other challenges such as pandemics.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.imf.org/en/Topics/imf-and-covid19/Fiscal-Policies-Database-in-Response-to-COVID-19>

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2024/sipri-fact-sheets/trends-world-military-expenditure-2023>

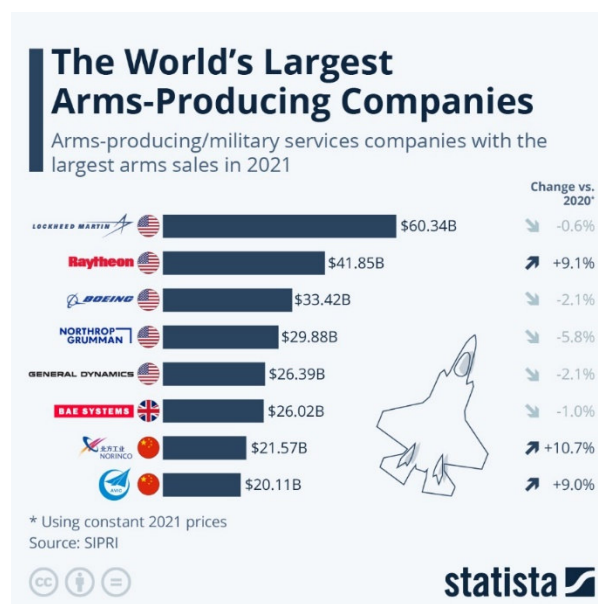
<sup>41</sup> <https://www.global-peace-dividend.org/about/>

**‘The Five Percent Proposal’** is a two-part formula to sustainably cut and redirect military spending that:<sup>42</sup> 1) almost halves global military spending via absolute annual cuts of 5% over 10 years (compounded to 40%), with those savings (\$960bn in total) redirected to urgent human and planetary needs, including climate finance, green transition, poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation and habitat preservations among others; and 2) thereafter implements a 5 percent threshold formula, designed to rein back annual military spending increases— no country allows annual increase in military spending to outstrip economic growth. Most economies grow less than 3% annually; this effectively translates to 2% annual reduction to their military spending.



A 40% reduction in military spending would also significantly reduce military carbon footprint by up to 40%.

## TAXING THE ARMS INDUSTRY



The top 100 arms companies accounted for \$592 billion in arms sales in 2021 (pre Gaza, pre Ukraine). Past and present conflicts grossly inflate arms industry profits.

(iii) **Sales tax on developed world arms companies. At this year's SB60 Bonn Climate Conference, Saudi Arabia, endorsed by the Arab Group and G77+China** offered a proposal whereby developed countries can raise \$441 billion “without compromising spending on other priorities entirely by adopting targeted domestic measures” such as a “financial transaction tax”, a defence company tax, a fashion tax and a “Big Tech Monopoly Tax”. An estimated \$21 billion a year could come from a 5% tax on the annual sales of the top 80 defense firms in developed countries.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>42</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/the-five-percent-proposal/>

<sup>43</sup> <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/06/06/developing-countries-suggest-rich-nations-tax-arms-fashion-and-tech-firms-for-climate/>

(iv) **Excess profits tax on the global arms industry could raise \$30 billion dollars a year to fund international climate finance.** In times of war, an additional punitive excess profits tax could deliver considerably more. Had such a war profiteers tax been applied in 2024 (for Ukraine and Gaza wars), an extra \$52bn would have brought the 2024 total to \$82 billion.<sup>44</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Our world is torn apart by wars rooted in failed 20<sup>th</sup> century foreign policy-making. Israel has dropped more bombs on Gaza in less than a year than were dropped on Dresden, Hamburg and London combined during WW2. From post 9/11 wars to Russia's invasion of Ukraine; from Yemen to Sudan and Congo, there is no end to the prolonged bloodshed, loss, pain and trauma.

The expansion of a fossil fuelled global arms race is well underway and new 'cold war' rhetoric is rising again. This at the very same moment humanity and all life on our planet Earth is facing the existential threat of substantially overshooting 1.5°C.

We are going in the wrong direction: it is incomprehensible that governments are ploughing more and more taxpayers money into their militaries when desperately needed climate finance for mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage is being delayed by the very nations historically responsible for the climate catastrophe.

Civil society calls are clear.

Global North governments should end public subsidies for fossil fuels. Tax systems should be reformed, so polluters and profiteers pay their dues. Vast amounts of government spending on weapons and military operations that harm people, destroy the environment while also being a massive source of carbon emissions, should be diverted towards programs for climate justice and our planet's security.

### **#PAYUP for Climate Finance.**

Tap military spending as a legitimate and significant source of public finance to contribute to the annual \$5 trillion climate finance sum needed and complement it with an arms industry excess profits tax.

Win-win for climate, climate finance, and peace.

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<sup>44</sup> <https://transformdefence.org/publication/excessprofitstax/>