



Building back better for a post-pandemic Green New Deal

And why defence policy and spending must not be left out of the GND equation

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WHEN IS DEFENCE NOT DEFENCE? WHEN IT'S A TIER ONE SECURITY THREAT THAT ISN'T TAKEN SERIOUSLY ENOUGH

"We have all been up against the same enemy. The same tiny opponent threatening everyone in much the same way, but members of the UN have still waged 193 separate campaigns, as if every country somehow contains a different species of human being... Unless we unite and turn our fire against our common foe, we know that everyone will lose... Our second step should be to develop the manufacturing capacity for treatments and vaccines so that the whole of humanity can hold them like missiles in silos ready to zap the alien organisms before they can attack... Never again must we wage 193 different campaigns against the same enemy."

This was Boris Johnson's Prime Minister's speech to United Nations General Assembly in September 2020.¹ It's a wonderful speech calling the world to unite. But it's disingenuous to say the least. Pandemic was a tier one security threat and nothing was done

"Humanity was caught napping. We have been scrabbling to catch up, and with agonising slowness we are making progress."

No. Politicians and defence planners were caught napping and the rest of us were left at risk.

The failure to act on the known national security threat of pandemic in the face of evidence (with attendant questions concerning funding); and that the need for civil society to think hard and fresh about what national security (or better still, human safety) should look like, is pressing. If we can look these major shortcomings in the face then we will be better equipped to respond to the (urgent) complex challenges in the future, making outcomes for both the climate emergency and reversing social inequality (especially as witnessed in health outcomes) better.

COVID-19 & THE WARTIME METAPHOR

The UK has lost many more lives due to mismanaging COVID-19 than civilians were killed in during WW2 blitz and in a shorter period of time – 40,000 civilians died in the seven-month period between September 1940 and May 1941.²

Doctors, nurses, care workers are 'frontline' in the 'battle' against COVID-19. Labour leader Keir Starmer described the delay in implementing 'track and trace' as a 'hole in our defences'.³

The UK government identified pandemic as a Tier 1 security threat in 2010 and 2015 National Security Strategies (NSS).⁴ The risk of human pandemic disease "remains one of the highest we face", reported the 2010 NSS. "There is a high probability of another influenza pandemic

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-speech-to-un-general-assembly-26-september-2020>

² <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/olympic-britain/crime-and-defence/the-fallen/>

³ <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-05-20/debates/AC290C61-34C0-4330-A077-7FCD23EB8DFB/Engagements>

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/61936/national-security-strategy.pdf;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/478936/52309_Cm_9161_NSS_SD_Review_PRINT_only.pdf

occurring and, based on a range of data, possible impacts of a future pandemic could be that up to one half of the UK population becomes infected, resulting in between 50,000 and 750,000 deaths in the UK, with corresponding disruption to everyday life.” During this time, however, little was done to turn the plan into action, whether in terms of infrastructure preparation or raising public awareness to deal with this particular threat, compared to other Tier One threats such as terrorism and wars.

General Sir Nick Carter made no mention of either pandemic or climate change at the annual RUSI Lecture in December 2019. Included in the report from Professor Michael Clarke of RUSI:⁵

“The Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) at his annual RUSI lecture has been widely reported as giving a sobering view of the security challenges that Britain faces in the coming decade...”

A resurgence of great power politics, a series of nasty trouble spots around the world, demographic trends that tend towards instability, and the disappearing lines between open conflict, civil strife, social and economic subversion...

It is necessary to embrace the "fourth industrial revolution" and genuinely integrate the "sunrise technologies" – robotics, artificial intelligence, quantum computing and other disruptive technologies – into our security thinking, rather than to leave them as the interesting afterthoughts for which there was never enough actual cash to exploit properly.”

However, speaking of the pandemic in April 2020, General Sir Nick Carter told us:⁶

“I would say that in all my more than 40 years of service this is the single greatest logistic challenge that I’ve come across. I’ll just give you a scale of the problem; in the 25 days since we’ve started working together with the NHS, they’ve gone from some 240 customers they deliver to normally to nearly 50,000 customers. This has involved creating 260,000ft of distribution warehouse space – that’s nearly four football fields’ worth – and some 38 additional delivery routes per day. That’s the equivalent to driving three times around the world. That is a major logistic challenge.”

It seems those in the UK (and other notable leading defence spending nations like the USA) charged with our protection, our ‘defence’, recognised the threat of pandemic then proceeded to marginalise it, more or less handing it over to austerity hit and/or privatised health systems and the underfunded WHO. National Security / Human Safety policies need to be drawn from a much wider remit if they are to truly rise to the challenge of combating the greatest threats to our collective human safety – climate change and pandemic.

Covid-19 has exposed that while authorities recognise both pandemic and climate change as major national security threats on paper, this is not reflected in the reality of resources and efforts applied by governments to address these threats.

⁵ <https://www.forces.net/news/general-sir-nick-carter-avoids-party-politics-issues-challenge-future-governments>

⁶ <https://www.army-technology.com/news/uk-chief-of-defence-staff-participates-in-daily-coronavirus-briefing/>

A POST-PANDEMIC GREEN RECOVERY IS ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO TRANSFORM DEFENCE THINKING

The Green New Deal is a comprehensive vision for a markedly improved, much belated, clean and equitable society for the 21st century.

But we argue that for the GND prosperity vision to be complete it needs it to be *peaceful* green prosperity. That means we need to think afresh about foreign and defence policy, just as we are with economic policy.

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. But climate chaos and pandemic show us that ‘national security’ – or rather *sustainable human safety* – policies need to be drawn from a much wider remit if they are to truly rise to the challenge of combating the greatest threats to our collective human safety. The time has come to place conventional threats alongside the much greater but entirely marginalised human safety threats of climate change and pandemic.

All this as we are in the midst of the sixth mass extinction.⁷

If the expectation of every aspect of human activity is to decarbonise – from agriculture to fashion, transport to house building – then the global military must surely be part of this.

In 2016, total public expenditures on climate change (international and domestic) amounted to \$141 billion while military expenditures of \$1.66 trillion.⁸ On average, the expenditure of national governments on climate change amounted to 8.5% of what they spent on defence, a ratio of 12:1.⁹ Yet the most socially and economically damaging threat to our collective global safety – climate change – is nowhere near centre stage in defence/security policy-making. The numbers speak for themselves and tell a damning story.

CLIMATE CHANGE DEMANDS ‘HUMAN SAFETY’ BE FRONT AND CENTRE IN OUR DEFENCE, SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICIES

The global human family has been locked down and in fear of its life not because anyone declared war, not because of nuclear threats, not because of ‘the other’ – but because of a virus.

The global military budget is nearing \$2 trillion annually. The UK has one of the world’s largest defence budgets, with nearly 40% of budget spent on equipment alone.¹⁰ While every aspect of human endeavour – energy, mining, construction, transport, agriculture, manufacturing, commercial businesses and residential housing – is being asked to cut emissions, the global military has been exempted from reporting emissions.¹¹ It’s estimated that the carbon footprint

⁷ What is a ‘mass extinction’ and are we in one now?, <https://theconversation.com/what-is-a-mass-extinction-and-are-we-in-one-now-122535>

⁸ <https://climatepolicyinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2017-Global-Landscape-of-Climate-Finance.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.oxfordresearchgroup.org.uk/a-tale-of-two-puzzles-accounting-for-military-and-climate-change-expenditures>

¹⁰ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8175/>

¹¹ <http://www.ipb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/IPB-Information-Paper-the-carbon-boot-print-1.pdf>

of British military is 11 million tonnes of CO₂e.¹² Globally, militaries and defence industries account for *at least 1%* of the total global greenhouse gas emissions, but the figure could be as high as 5%.¹³ For comparison, civil aviation accounts for approximately 2.1 % of global GHG emissions.¹⁴ While the UK's MOD is making 'back room' carbon cuts ie administrative, it is, like all militaries, completely dependent on fossil fuels. Through the pandemic, the UK military's role was to help support the delivery of 1bn pieces of PPE.¹⁵

TIME magazine interviewed Former President of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, about the pandemic:¹⁶

"What we urgently need now is a rethinking of the entire concept of security. Even after the end of the Cold War, it has been envisioned mostly in military terms. Over the past few years, all we've been hearing is talk about weapons, missiles and airstrikes... The overriding goal must be human security: providing food, water and a clean environment and caring for people's health. To achieve it, we need to develop strategies, make preparations, plan and create reserves. But all efforts will fail if governments continue to waste money by fueling the arms race... I'll never tire of repeating: we need to demilitarize world affairs, international politics and political thinking."

At the moment, two of the most socially and economically damaging threats to our collective human security/safety – climate change and pandemic – are not centre place in defence/security policy-making but are primarily relegated to a supportive, humanitarian military response.¹⁷

Shouldn't climate change and pandemic be *central* to how 'defence' is redefined by all nations? If not now, when? When *will* be the time to redefine, redesign, repurpose the 'terms of reference' for our foreign and defence policy-making?

Local, national, global inter-connected human safety must, of course, be prepared to deal with for 'traditional' threats ie cross-border aggression as well as 'modern' threats such as cyber warfare. But the time has come for citizens and leaders alike to recognise that these threats must be proportionate in both time and resourcing and should take their *appropriate* place alongside threats of **equal or greater importance** eg accidental or planned nuclear attack, pandemic, climate change, poverty/environmental/extractive driven conflict. Global health, peace/ disarmament and climate change are, in fact, **hard** defence & security issues.

Climate change and COVID 19 are both screaming at us that it's high time we got beyond national self-interest.

¹² https://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-05/SGR-DUK_UK_Military_Env_Impacts.pdf

¹³ https://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-07/SGR_Military-carbon-footprint_London19.pdf; *Indefensible: The true cost of the global military to our climate and human security*, <http://transformdefence.org/publication/indefensible/>

¹⁴

[https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603925/EPRS_BRI\(2017\)603925_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603925/EPRS_BRI(2017)603925_EN.pdf)

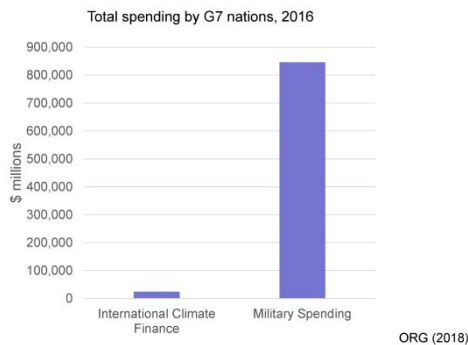
¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-support-force-the-mods-contribution-to-the-coronavirus-response>

¹⁶ <https://time.com/5820669/mikhail-gorbachev-coronavirus-human-security/>

¹⁷

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/646821/20151203-FOE_35_final_v29_web.pdf

Military v climate spending



Military v climate spending

Spending by G7 nations, 2016

	International Climate Finance (US\$M)	Military Spending (US\$M)	Climate Finance as % of Military Spending
Canada	230	15,157	1.5%
France	4,097	55,745	7.3%
Germany	9,117	41,067	22.2%
Italy	249	27,934	0.9%
Japan	8,466	46,126	18.4%
UK	1,495	48,253	3.1%
USA	1,244	611,186	0.2%

ORG (2018)

(Slides from a presentation by Dr Stuart Parkinson of Scientists for Global Responsibility)¹⁸

On the pandemic, George Monbiot wrote:¹⁹

"We are defending ourselves against the wrong threats. For decades, UK governments have been fighting not just the last war but a redundant notion of war, spending hundreds of billions against imaginary hazards. At the same time, as we have become horribly aware over the past few weeks, they have neglected real and urgent dangers. ..."

That £41.5bn spent on the military is more than twice as much money as the UK spends on preventing climate and ecological breakdown – which are not just potential threats but current emergencies. It is hundreds of times more, as we are now discovering, than the government has spent on preparing for pandemics. [emphasis added]"

If we do not put 'human safety' front and centre in defence and security policy-making, we will be not only unable to handle another global pandemic but also unable to deal with the consequences of the climate breakdown. The reality is that despite the unprecedented impact on society and economy by the Covid-19 virus, it will be small in comparison after we fail to prevent full-on climate breakdown.

THE BIG MILITARY SPENDERS AND COVID-19

There is a correlation between those who have high military budget expenditure and those who handled the COVID-19 pandemic badly. Only 6 out of the top 20 military spenders rank inside the top 20 countries with highest hospital beds per 1000 people (and only 8 top military spenders rank inside the top 50 investors in hospital beds). There is a non-trivial correlation between spending excessively in 'defence' and not enough on hospital beds to effectively handle the COVID-19 pandemic — so much so that the UK²⁰, Italy²¹, Spain²², USA²³ kept sending hospital patients back to care homes, exposing the most vulnerable to COVID-19 in society, thus

¹⁸ https://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-07/SGR_Military-carbon-bootprint_London19.pdf

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/08/national-defence-corona-pandemic-fighter-jets>

²⁰ <https://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/health-coronavirus-britain-elderly/>

²¹ <https://www.politico.eu/article/the-silent-coronavirus-covid19-massacre-in-italy-milan-lombardy-nursing-care-homes-elderly/>

²² <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-52188820>

²³ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/24/us/nursing-homes-coronavirus.html>;
<https://apnews.com/5ebc0ad45b73a899efa81f098330204c>

resulting in care homes accounting for half of total coronavirus deaths during the first wave of the pandemic.²⁴ This did nothing but turn a pandemic into a full-blown crisis. This would have been completely preventable if they hadn't cut public healthcare to the bone²⁵ while spending \$billions on the 'big boys ultimate toys', F-35s²⁶ or Trident²⁷.

The 20 countries with the highest military expenditure in 2019

Rank	Spending \$bn	Country
1	732	USA
2	261	China
3	71	India
4	65	Russia
5	62	Saudi Arabia
6	50	France
7	49	Germany
8	49	UK
9	48	Japan
10	44	South Korea
11	27	Brazil
12	27	Italy
13	26	Australia
14	22	Canada
15	21	Israel
16	20	Turkey
17	17	Spain
18	13	Iran
19	12	Netherlands
20	12	Poland

Hospital beds per 1,000 people
(so called "developed" economies are highlighted)

North Korea - 14.3	Malta - 4.1	Ireland - 28	Peru - 1b	Sudan - 0.8
Japan - 13.4	Netherlands - 4.1	UK - 28	Rwanda - 1b	Angola - 0.8
South Korea - 13.5	Slovenia - 4.6	Brunei - 2.1	Oman - 1b	DRC - 0.8
Belarus - 11	Kyrgyzstan - 4.5	Canada - 2.1	Egypt - 1b	Liberia - 0.8
Ukraine - 8.8	Macedonia - 4.4	Namibia - 2.1	Mexico - 1.5	Venezuela - 0.8
Germany - 8.3	Finland - 4.4	Turkey - 2.1	Colombia - 1.5	Burundi - 0.8
Russia - 8.2	Maldives - 4.3	Saudi Arabia - 2.1	Ecuador - 1.5	Bangladesh - 0.8
Austria - 1b	Greece - 4.3	St Vincent & the Grenadines - 2b	Iran - 1.5	Sudan (H 2018) - 0.72
Turkmenistan - 7.4	China - 4.2	Sweden - 2b	Laos - 1.5	Yemen - 0.7
Lithuania - 7.3	Armenia - 4.2	Georgia - 2b	Syria - 1.5	Eritrea - 0.7
Hungary - 7.0	Uzbekistan - 4.0	Viet Nam - 2b	Djibouti - 1.4	Haiti - 0.7
Mongolia - 7.0	Montenegro - 4.0	Jordan - 1.4	Honduras - 0.7	Mozambique - 0.7
Bulgaria - 6.8	Norway - 3.9	Denmark - 2.5	Kenya - 1.4	Togo - 0.7
Kazakhstan - 6.7	Antigua & Barbuda - 3.8	Singapore - 2.4	Salomon Islands - 1.4	Tanzania - 0.7
Poland - 6.5	Australia - 3.8	Fiji - 2.3	Iraq - 1.4	India - 0.6
Czechia - 6.5	Grenada - 3.1	Panama - 2.3	Belize - 1.3	Guatemala - 0.6
France - 6.5	Libya - 3.1	Tunisia - 2.3	Cameroon - 1.3	Pakistan - 0.6
Cook Islands - 6.3	Seychelles - 3b	Brazil - 2.2	El Salvador - 1.3	Afghanistan - 0.5
Romania - 6.3	Sri Lanka - 3.5	Chile - 2.2	Gabon - 1.3	Benin - 0.5
Belgium - 6.2	Bosnia & Herzegovina - 3.5	Comoros - 2.2	Lesotho - 1.3	Nigeria - 0.5
Timor-Leste - 5.9	Italy - 3.4	Cabo Verde - 2.1	Malawi - 1.3	Philippines - 0.5
Moldova - 5.8	Cyprus - 3.4	Equatorial Guinea - 2.1	Paraguay - 1.3	Uganda - 0.5
Barbados - 5.8	Mauritius - 3.4	Eswatini - 2.1	Saint Lucia - 1.3	Burkina Faso - 0.4
Latvia - 5.8	Portugal - 3.4	Thailand - 2.1	Indonesia - 1.2	Chad - 0.4
Slovakia - 5.8	Iceland - 3.2	Kuwait - 2.0	Qatar - 1.2	Côte d'Ivoire - 0.4
Serbia - 5.7	Suriname - 3.1	Bahrain - 2.0	Costa Rica - 1.2	Mauritania - 0.4
Tuvalu - 5.6	Israel - 3.1	Zambia - 2	UAE - 1.2	Sierra Leone - 0.4
Croatia - 5.6	Trinidad & Tobago - 3.0	Algeria - 1.9	Bolivia - 1.1	Ethiopia - 0.3
Cuba - 5.2	Spain - 3.0	Kiribati - 1.9	Gambia - 1.1	Guinea - 0.3
Niue - 5.2	Bahamas - 2.9	Malaysia - 1.9	Morocco - 1.1	Nepal - 0.3
Argentina - 5.0	Sao Tome & Principe - 2.9	Botswana - 1.8	CAR - 1.0	Senegal - 0.3
Nauru - 5.0	US - 2.9	Bhutan - 1.7	Guinea-Bissau - 1.0	Niger - 0.3
Estonia - 5.0	Albania - 2.9	Jamaica - 1.7	Ghana - 0.9	Madagascar - 0.2
Luxembourg - 4.8	Lebanon - 2.9	Zimbabwe - 1.7	Myanmar - 0.9	Mali - 0.1
Tajikistan - 4.8	New Zealand - 2.8	Congo - 1b	Nicaragua - 0.9	
Azerbaijan - 4.7	South Africa - 2.8	The DR - 1b	Somalia - 0.9	
Switzerland - 4.7	Uruguay - 2.8	Guyana - 1b	Cambodia - 0.8	

Credits: SIPRI²⁸ and Mona Chalabi²⁹

And as Andrew Feinstein, author of *'Shadow World: Inside the Global Arms Trade'*, says 'the arms trade is making us sick'. He says of the intersection of pandemic and military spending,³⁰

"Our patterns of spending show that our defense industry, the arms trade are actually making us far less safe. It's not just the people are being killed in pointless wars, be it in Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen, but now people are dying in their homes because we would rather invest in defense than in public health. And why are we doing that because of an out of control militarism that is promoted by our

²⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/13/half-of-coronavirus-deaths-happen-in-care-homes-data-from-eu-suggests>; <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/16/across-the-world-figures-reveal-horrific-covid-19-toll-of-care-home-deaths>

²⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/31/how-a-decade-of-privatisation-and-cuts-exposed-england-to-coronavirus>; <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/health/2020/04/coronavirus-italy-lombardy-private-healthcare-response>; <https://www.politico.eu/article/in-spain-austerity-legacy-cripples-coronavirus-fight/>; <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/mar/21/medicare-for-all-coronavirus-covid-19-single-payer>

²⁶ <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/2016/03/15/how-i-learned-to-stop-worrying-and-love-the-lightning-jet/>

²⁷ <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/trident-replacement-cost-nuclear-submarines-205-billion-independent-trident-commission-cnd-caroline-a7025956.html>

²⁸ https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/fs_2020_04_milex_0_0.pdf

²⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2020/apr/06/coronavirus-american-reaction-economy-covid-19>

³⁰ <https://youtu.be/zhe7JZ0K0xo>

politicians and senior corporate executives. And the reason that they do that is because the arms trade keeps money circulating in the political process from which they all benefit.

Think of the size of our armies or navies, or air forces. Our governments spend around \$1.75 trillion every year on wars, on weapons on conflict. And this industry of war is the most corrupt trade that we've ever come across in human history accounted for around 40% of all corruption in world trade, wasting billions of dollars every year. If we could deploy that sort of resource to address the Coronavirus crisis that we're currently living through... So as we give praise to our health workers and other public servants who are putting themselves on the frontline of this health crisis, let's remember who are the truly important people. Perhaps this is an opportunity. Let's embrace our global humanity, which is how we're going to get through this crisis. Let's put aside our obsession with enemies. With conflict. This is an opportunity for peace, it is an opportunity to promote our common humanity."

Moreover, the role of the global military in climate change is now starting to be revealed and challenged.³¹

All this leads to one place: GND planning must take military emissions into account and more widely it must demand transformation of defence policy and spending in the same way it does economic policy-making and spending.

Some in the USA – which spends more than \$700bn annually on defence³² – have made the connection.

U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders in his Green New Deal offer during the presidential race included this courageous, paradigm-shifting pledge,³³

Bring together the leaders of the major industrialized nations with the goal of using the trillions of dollars our nations spend on misguided wars and weapons of mass destruction to instead work together internationally to combat our climate crisis and take on the fossil fuel industry. Bernie recognizes that the Pentagon is the largest institutional emitter of greenhouse gases in the world and that the United States spends \$81 billion annually to protect oil supplies and transport routes. We are uniquely positioned to lead the planet in a wholesale shift away from militarism.

GREEN NEW DEAL PLUS – WHAT IS IT?

Green New Deal Plus (GND Plus) is a three-point plan that gives shape to an essential, additional dimension to all existing Green New Deal discussions and plans.

High defence spending inhibits economic and social development while current defence policy and practice is climate incompatible with the spirit of Green New Deals.

We need not just green prosperity, but peaceful green prosperity. GND Plus calls for:

1. The break-up of the military-oil industry relationship and complete decarbonising of the world's militaries.

³¹ *Indefensible: The true cost of the global military to our climate and human security*, <http://transformdefence.org/publication/indefensible/>

³² <https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/pentagon-budget-white-house/>

³³ <https://berniesanders.com/issues/green-new-deal/>

The world's militaries are the biggest institutional users of oil in the world and are therefore a major driver for climate change, both in terms of day-to-day operations as well as wars, many of which are conducted for oil. Runaway global military spending enables all this. A carbon-neutral world demands we fully *decarbonise* our militaries.

Green New Deal Plus applauds the ongoing efforts by all those advocating the diversification of the defence and security industries – they must also decarbonise so that they are fit for the green new world.

A decarbonised military, defence and security sector is not about delivering 'greener ways to conduct war': weaponry and war will always kill living beings, will always destroy and pollute environments. Rather, this idea is the starting point for much needed if challenging discussion, one that can lead us to a paradigm shift in national and international defence and security policy-making for a carbon-neutral world.

2. Open up debate: what does 'defence' look like in a climate changed, post-pandemic world?

Green New Deal Plus calls for a decarbonised sustainable global military with a transformed and transformative doctrine fit for purpose in this century of climate breakdown and pandemic – one based on revisiting and updating earlier work on the concept of **non-offensive defence**³⁴ and prioritising global human security through social, economic and environmental justice. Primarily, national self-interest should be replaced with global human security. Much greater investment in **conflict prevention and international peacekeeping will reap significant reward**³⁵ – it is cheap in comparison to arms-race spending between countries, driven by self-interests, profits and domination and we need much greater investment for on the ground, local peace-building. As for security threats, we need the definitions to go much wider – **from pandemic to climate chaos to far greater investment in early warning and disaster risk reduction**, as well as post disaster reconstruction.

Linked to this, we need a transformation on the UN Security Council, notably the well past its sell by date current P5 arrangement. The **UN P5+1 nations**³⁶ **charged with keeping the world's peace account for 80% arms sales**, the majority of which to the developing world.³⁷ Many developing countries spend more on defence than either education or health and often buy from developed nations.

Climate change is a social, economic and environmental issue but it is currently a pretext for some governments to expand their military/security reach. Refugees fleeing their homes because of climate change should be free to move if they must and then welcomed by other nations – not left to drown in the seas and oceans.

³⁴ <https://www.sgr.org.uk/publications/offensive-insecurity>

³⁵ *Evaluating the Conflict-Reducing Effect of UN Peacekeeping Operations*, Håvard Hegre, Lisa Hultman and Håvard Mokleiv Nygård, 2018. <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/700203>

³⁶ Permanent members of the security council, USA, Russia, China, UK, France, plus Germany

³⁷ *Trends In International Arms Transfers*, SIPRI, 2017. https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/fssipri_at2017_0.pdf

3. Implementation of The Five Percent Formula³⁸ to progressively cut runaway global military spending (and emissions) in order to fund human security; global health; international development and climate change impact; global green economy needs.

Tipping Point North South's Five Percent Proposal³⁹ makes the case that runaway military spending is a long overdue international development issue.⁴⁰ We need to implement an ambitious, fair, practical formula that can start to pull back the scandalous sums spent individually and collectively on global military spending; to redirect those savings to urgent human need and long term development; this in addition to funds to clean up our shamefully polluted planet; and to properly fund peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

As we creep ever closer to a \$2 trillion 'redline' of global annual military spending, we are about to enter another arms spending race.⁴¹ Should governments and multi-lateral agencies adopt the two-part Five Percent Formula, global military spending would be gradually and decisively decreased, halving over 10 years, followed by a 5% threshold formula designed to rein military spending back thereafter.

This would open up \$700 billion funding over the first decade and can be allocated to address:

- International: immediate and urgent poverty reduction; sustainable development reflecting civil society activism on climate & economic justice; peace/conflict prevention & human rights; investing in the global green economy.
- Domestic: counteracting effects of austerity on public services; investing in clean, green jobs, universal basic services (including healthcare).

WHERE NEXT? SOME THOUGHTS

There is increasing pressure in the USA to include cuts to and redirection of Pentagon budget to GND plans. If it can be done in the USA, the largest spender by far, then it can be done in the UK and other countries. The UK – like every other nation on earth – takes its lead from the world's biggest military spender, the USA.

We need GND supporting parliamentarians to be brave enough to take up this difficult but highly GND relevant issue.

We should express solidarity and support in whatever fora possible for those brave political voices inside the USA (Barbara Lee, Bernie Sanders, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez) who are trying to turn the USA military tanker around through the GND prism.

³⁸ <https://transformdefence.org/the-five-percent-proposal/the-5-formula-what-is-it/>

³⁹ <https://transformdefence.org/the-five-percent-proposal/>

⁴⁰ <https://transformdefence.org/the-five-percent-proposal/military-spend-is-a-development-issue/>

⁴¹ <https://transformdefence.org/publication/approaching-the-2-trillion-redline/>

We should take up Bernie Sanders call on how to re-structure defence planning and spending, in a pandemic, climate changed time, taking Barbara Lee's work as a starting point, who proposed a plan to cut the Pentagon annual budget by up to \$350bn.⁴² *Funds redirected to climate change mitigation, pandemic prevention and reversing inequality are routes to delivering human safety at a personal, local, national and global level.*

We should address the impact of the military in climate change in all GND plans (see GND Plus)⁴³ and tackle the difficult and challenging reality of the military-oil industry relationship and climate change. *The break-up of the military-oil industry relationship and complete decarbonising of the world's militaries must be a part of this debate.*

We should request the UK military to 'publish what it burns' and set an example to others in the top 20 military spenders and emitters. Until now, we have collectively and consistently ignored the massive yet unaccounted for responsibility of the world's militaries to climate change, from their *day-to-day operational activities to the wars and conflicts of which they are part.*

We should call for new funds to be redirected/allocated to a Global Pandemic Surveillance and Control Organisation under the auspices of the WHO. WHO estimated the cost of planning for a pandemic was around \$1 per person per year.⁴⁴ That is \$8bn a year.

Simply diverting 1% of the annual global military expenditure (\$1.9 trillion) will make available \$19bn a year to fund both WHO and this new global pandemic prevention initiative. 1% of the British MOD budget is £400m.⁴⁵

Significantly increase the WHO budget. The WHO has an annual budget of \$2bn – a profoundly inadequate sum given its (necessarily) huge remit. But this figure is doubly inadequate when taking into account the social and economic consequences of the potential for a mishandled global health crisis.

At current WHO levels, its annual \$2 billion is only 0.1% of annual \$1.9 trillion we spend globally on militaries. Redirecting just 1% of global military spending in one single year can fund the WHO for 10 years. It's hard to argue with this '*value for money*' case.⁴⁶

Better funding of global Disaster Risk Reduction efforts. Global Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR) efforts are grossly underfunded. The international community spent on average around \$500m annually on DDR via UNDRR.⁴⁷ This is 0.05% of the annual global military spending. 1%

⁴² <https://lee.house.gov/news/press-releases/after-years-of-wasted-spending-congresswoman-lee-calls-to-cut-pentagon-budget-reprioritize-programs-that-keep-us-safe>

⁴³ <https://transformdefence.org/green-new-deal-plus/>

⁴⁴ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/panic-and-neglect-investing-health-security-financing-pandemic-preparedness-national>

⁴⁵

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/869612/20200227_CH_UK_Defence_in_Numbers_2019.pdf

⁴⁶ *Global military spending, sustainable human safety and value for money*, <http://transformdefence.org/publication/value-for-money/>

⁴⁷ <https://medium.com/@UNDPasiapac/the-future-of-disaster-risk-reduction-is-in-better-financing-1605454bf1bd>

of the British MOD budget alone is enough to fund at its current level entirely. We are in the midst of climate breakdown. We have to better fund global DDR efforts together.

As Albert Einstein enlightened us, “The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking.”

Increasingly, it is becoming apparent that this is the case with military spending, defence and security policy. The time is coming when we will have to *transform defence*.⁴⁸

Green New Deal Plus offers a roadmap in that direction.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <https://transformdefence.org/>

⁴⁹ <https://transformdefence.org/green-new-deal-plus/>



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