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TPNS Contribution to COP 30 Presidency Roadmaps COP30 Presidency Roadmap for Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels in a Just, Orderly and Equitable Manner (paragraph 28.d/GST1)

THE WAR MACHINE & ARMS INDUSTRY: A CRITICAL BARRIER TO A JUST TRANSITION AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUELS

BARRIER

Since the Industrial Revolution the military has been one of the leading drivers for the wholesale adoption of fossil fuels for both itself and the wider society (coal had been essential for the British Empire, and then later oil became key for the American Empire's takeover).¹ **Fossil fuels thus became the lifeblood of the modern military** and this will remain the case well beyond 2050. Furthermore, wars, wars for oil and rampant militarism are major contributors to "**energy insecurity**" (for example, the energy cost of Russia's invasion of Ukraine to the EU and UK from 2022 to 2025 was \$1.8 trillion);² to the rush for **military-relevant critical minerals** extraction; and to the **undermining of international co-operation** and multilateralism³.

We are in a new arms race. The world is witnessing more wars now in 2026 than any time since WW2. **Annual global military spending is pushing US\$3 trillion** and high military spending is the enabler of war. This is exemplified by USA, which, for decades, has outspent the next ten military powers and has itself been at war every year since 1980.

¹ <https://direct.mit.edu/books/book/5413/The-Pentagon-Climate-Change-and-WarCharting-the>

² <https://transitionsecurity.org/trillion-dollar-bills/>

³ <https://transformdefence.org/publication/how-to-transform-defence-10-talking-points-for-a-difficult-conversation/>

Despite the existential threat of the climate emergency, the world has been plunged into an arms race by a small number of nations, in full knowledge that **military spending and military emissions positively correlate**.⁴ **Global (non-conflict) military emissions already account for about 5.5% of total global greenhouse gas emissions**, an amount which will rise even further in the case of war.⁵ Despite this, countries are currently still not required to report military emissions in their national reporting to the UNFCCC. While some published their military emissions independently, **almost no country has disclosed their full military carbon footprint** (much less 'bootprint' that includes conflict-related emissions).⁶

The high spending fossil-fuel reliant militaries want us to believe they can “green” their way to net zero, but **militaries are the largest institutional greenhouse gases emitters in the world** and they will remain utterly dependent on fossil fuels for many decades to come.⁷ Since the modern military cannot exist without fossil fuels, **it and its associated (arms) industries are one of the hardest to decarbonise (economic) sectors**. Why? Because **the more they spend on gas-guzzling big-ticket military equipment, the more military emissions are emitted**.⁸ The latest generation of gas-guzzling weaponry systems, for example the F-35 fighter jet consumes around **5,500 litres of jet fuel per flight hour**. Shockingly, are all expected to be in service beyond 2050 – in complete opposition to the 2050 Net-Zero goal. It is therefore impossible for military to “green” its way out of fossil-fuel addiction – fuel switching is not a realistic plan for current and next-generation military jets, tanks and warships nor the arms industry’s production of bombs, missiles and weapon systems.⁹

Decarbonisation must be linked to demilitarisation and to the reversal of runaway military spending.

The global top 20 military spenders alone, despite comprising a mere 10% of the number of countries in the world, account for more than 80% of the total global military spending (more than \$2.7 trillion in 2024)¹⁰. It is estimated that since 2001 the **top 20 military spenders combined dedicated US\$40 trillion** on their militaries and are therefore responsible for at least **10 billion tCO2e of military-related emissions during the first quarter of the 21st century**;¹¹ this figure does not include conflict-related emissions.

With all of society being required to decarbonise and transition away from the fossil-fuel based economy, **the military-oil-industrial complex must not remain a destructive exception**.¹²

⁴ <https://transformdefence.org/publication/natos-3-5-spending-goal/>

⁵ <https://www.sgr.org.uk/publications/estimating-military-s-global-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

⁶ <https://www.sgr.org.uk/publications/military-greenhouse-gas-emissions-reporting-how-reliable-it>

⁷ <https://time.com/6148778/us-military-climate-change/>

⁸ <https://transformdefence.org/publication/indefensible/>

⁹ <https://www.jcfj.ie/article/overturning-the-economics-of-war-to-deliver-a-co-operative-future-and-peaceful-green-prosperity/>

¹⁰ <https://www.sipri.org/publications/2025/sipri-fact-sheets/trends-world-military-expenditure-2024>

¹¹ <https://transformdefence.org/publication/climate-reparations-for-military-emissions/>

¹² <https://www.degrowthjournal.org/publications/2023-08-21-placing-the-military-in-the-degrowth-narrative/>

Its intentional omission by world powers is and will remain a major obstacle to humanity's 100% renewable future, enshrining the 'right' to initiate (often resource) wars in order to guarantee "energy security" – synonymous with the unchallenged assured existence of the fossil-fuel military. This is in sharp contrast to the clean, green, often decentralised renewable energy sources that are in abundance globally and that barely need to be "secured".

In peacetime and in war, high military-spending, fossil-fuel dependent militaries are at the heart of the climate crisis.¹³ Calls for the **reduction and reallocation of military spending have been firmly embedded within the United Nations** since its founding.¹⁴ Now more than ever is the time to act.

Standing up for people and planet means advocating for military decarbonisation and demilitarisation.¹⁵

SOLUTION

ACHIEVING A JUST, ORDERLY AND EQUITABLE TRANSITION: INDIVISIBLE — DEMILITARISATION & MILITARY DECARBONISATION

In peacetime and in war high military-spending and fossil-fuel dependent militaries are at the heart of the climate crisis. Therefore, **both demilitarisation and military decarbonisation are central in the fulfilment of a just, orderly and equitable transition away from fossil fuels.** As a start this means addressing critical gaps in UNFCCC reporting alongside ways in which nations can advance greater international co-operation by reversing runaway military spending. Combined, they are a vital element in the progressive transition away from fossil fuels in order to create sustainable societies and economies.

LEVERS & PROPOSALS

1. **No exemption for military emissions:** All nations to compulsory submit full and comprehensive GHG military emissions reporting to IPCC/UNFCCC.
2. **Military decarbonisation:** All nations to include their militaries and military technology industries in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) GHG emission reduction plans and targets.
3. **Decarbonisation of the military-oil-industrial complex:** Emissions by the supply chain of the military (eg the arms industry) are estimated to be around 4 times as much as by the military.¹⁶ The arms industry is among the most carbon intensive economic sectors. Therefore, participants in the military supply chain must either decarbonise or transition to other clean industries.

¹³ <https://transformdefence.org/publication/summit-of-the-future/>

¹⁴ <https://www.un-ilibrary.org/content/books/9789210046459>

¹⁵ [https://www.cell.com/one-earth/abstract/S2590-3322\(25\)00284-2](https://www.cell.com/one-earth/abstract/S2590-3322(25)00284-2)

¹⁶ <https://www.sgr.org.uk/publications/military-spending-rises-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions-what-does-research-say>

4. **Implement Article 2.1.(c) of the Paris Agreement** which obliges states to “making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development”. Increased and high military spending undermines the mandate of Article 2.1.(c) and should therefore be progressively reduced to less than 1% of GDP.
5. **Global Just Transition Fund, within the Fossil Fuel Treaty**, could facilitate the redirection of public finance from military spending toward climate action – financing the just transition, reducing the military's fossil fuel dependence and the emissions it generates, and fostering the conditions of trust, cooperation and diplomacy upon which a managed and equitable phase-out of fossil fuels depends.
6. **Proposal for Demilitarisation:** since military spending accelerates the climate emergency, a Working Group should be formed led by progressive nations that wish to support research, advancement and implementation of route(s) by which nations can agree on the universal and equitable redirection of wasted military spending to climate finance and just transition.¹⁷
7. **UNSC Reform:** Military decarbonisation to be part of the UN Security Council mandate and UNSC reform, making way for people/planet centred, progressive, cooperative, climate-emergency-appropriate policies.

¹⁷ <https://transformdefence.org/the-five-percent-proposal/>