

TIPPING POINT NORTH SOUTH

A co-operative that supports and initiates creative, campaign-driven projects that advance the global social justice agenda, through its Film Fund and other activities

<http://tippingpointnorthsouth.org>
E: info@tippingpointnorthsouth.org
T: 020 8847 0377 M: 07779 203455
Co-Founder: Deborah Burton

SUBMISSION to Labour's International Development Taskforce **Deadline 7 Jan 2018**

Tipping Point North South's founders, current staff and board, include former senior Christian Aid debt, trade and tax justice campaigners who still work in the sector.

TPNS work to date includes **cinema documentaries** ([We Are Many](#) about global anti-Iraq war movement & [Open Bethlehem](#)); **cultural/political events** ([Bethlehem Unwrapped](#), [Attlee Nation](#), [MLK Global](#)) and developing our own **campaigns** ([Make Apartheid History](#) Palestine) and [Five Percent Proposal](#).

Submission: Military Spending is an international development issue

<https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/military-spend-is-a-development-issue/>

Proposal: We have applied our experience on debt, trade and tax campaigns to formulate a roadmap to address this

<https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/full-report-the-five-percent-campaign/the-5-formula-what-is-it/> (This work is funded by Polden-Puckham Charitable Foundation)

TPNS is a member of the Progressive Development Forum, through which we learned about the oral evidence sessions in December 2017. Having attended both sessions we very much wanted to send in a submission. We are appreciative of and hugely encouraged by the fact that this taskforce has been created, with a truly forward looking approach and within which we can share an idea such as this.

Prepared by Deborah Burton & Dr. Ho-Chih Lin

1. What would a world for the many, not the few, look like in 2030? Reaping rewards from sensible and lower military spending budgets with savings redirected to meeting increased global social justice needs.

The world would more fully understand that impact of runaway military spending on the development narrative is huge. It would recognise the fact that **military spending is as every bit as central to understanding power, poverty, economic crises and unjust distribution of resources** as other structural campaigns such as debt, trade, tax, climate change and most recently the 'war on drugs'. By joining the ranks of debt cancellation, Robin Hood Tax and other tax related measures, **military spending savings could be regarded as yet one more significant 'new' revenue stream**, redirecting the funds captured to serving the needs of the global community (including SDGS).

It is time to call out the unsustainable scandal that is excessive military spending, **getting us close to a \$2trillion** annual global spend (this figure is **before** the full costs of war are added in). While [poverty and hunger](#) are widespread and we face climate catastrophe, **global military expenditure is higher now than at height of Cold War** with billions of tax-payers pounds, dollars and euros flowing into the coffers of the profit-oriented private sector – the military industrial complex. This constitutes a massive loss of funds for real development and public investment, while the costs incurred to deal with post-conflict destruction also, conveniently, fall to nation states. Does this sound familiar? As investigative author and former ANC MP [Andrew Feinstein](#) says, '*neoliberalism needs the war machine*' while Medact believes that '*militarisation is an underlying and root cause of poor health worldwide*'. Global inequality is only reinforced by rich countries' military budgets which, directly and indirectly, contribute to the decimation of economies in the developing world [while their profits soar](#). **This \$2tr figure also sucks money away from funding real threats** (climate change, poverty, resource depletion) while also undermining international development in myriad ways. We see UN appeals struggle for funds (often linked to conflict); we see the [catastrophic damage](#) wreaked by powerful western militaries through interventions in Iraq, Libya, Yemen; we see many poor countries spend more on their military than education and health.

As with most rich countries, UK development aspirations collide (disgracefully) with our [military ambition](#) as both aid and military spending are tools of foreign policy (see recent CSSF, Panorama, [GJN report](#) & JC letter). The P5 members of the UN security council are no better – combined, they account for approx 70% of arms sales globally; with approx 60% of global arms sales go to developing nations from a handful of rich nations. Sitting on the P5, NATO, Commonwealth, G8, the UK is also the second biggest arms exporter in the world, has the 5th largest military budget (\$48bn) and *The Independent* revealed last year that the UK sold weapons to 22 of 30 countries on its own human rights watch list since 2010. Last year, CAAT, OXFAM and other NGOs working in Yemen, brought the UK's aid and military policy-hypocrisy into sharp focus by challenging the morality of the UK's supplying Saudi Arabia with weaponry on the one hand, while offering humanitarian aid to a devastated civilian population on the other.

The policy- amorality we have witnessed in Yemen does offer us a moment where, as a nation with a seat on all major in'tl bodies, the UK can start to put some home- truths out there. We could become a global leader in the following aspect: road-mapping a long-overdue rebalancing of the relationship between international development (or rather global social justice delivery) with ethical foreign policy-making that, in turn, could lead to the re-thinking of how taxes directed to military spending should reflect a different type of security policy-making that delivers more and better progressive international development, (including major increase in UN DPKO funds). Contrary to the current Conservative calls to shift money from the development budget to the MOD, the UK may have a far better security outcome if policies supporting international social justice secured more funding, not less.

2. How can Labour's international development policy help build it? By taking the courageous political decision [to tackle this issue head on](#). The ATT is underway and SDG 16 is tasked to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies. *In truth, neither go far enough* - in much the same way that 0.7% was not enough and we needed debt cancellation, trade and tax justice. Working with the new *Dept for Peace and Disarmament*, as well as other key govt departments, DfID can develop radical new ideas around development & social justice, defence & security

3. Our single best policy idea for a Labour government to pursue in international development to create an expert working group to explore how to address the issue in general and the [Five Percent proposal](#) in particular – a [detailed roadmap](#) to deliver deep, decades long, sustainable cuts to excessive global military spending via a feasible, international, fair yet ambitious [two-stage '5%'](#) formula, with massive savings redirected to delivering a global social justice agenda. A Case Study: [Health and WHO](#).