

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

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SUBMISSION TO LABOUR NATIONAL POLICY FORUM CONSULTATION Deadline 24 June 2018

Tipping Point North South submission - Labour National Policy Forum consultation: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

Addressing SDG 16: To promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Submission: Many of the Sustainable Development Goals are impacted by conflict. SDG 16 needs to go much further than presently constituted (primarily Arms Trade Treaty focussed on the subject of conflict). Sustainable development requires that global runaway military spending be regarded as an international development issue and that the UK can lead the way in shaping this debate.

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

[*The Five Percent Campaign* offers a roadmap to get to sustainable, equitable, global reductions in military spending with a considered proposal to re-direct to global social need (eg to health and education).]

About Us

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](#). TPNS is a member of the Progressive Development Forum.

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Tipping Point North South submission:

Labour National Policy Forum consultation: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

1. What would a world for the many, not the few, look like in 2030, and how could Labour's international development policy commit to achieving it?

By 2030 a world for the many not few would see us reaping rewards from sensible but much lower military spending budgets with savings redirected to meeting increased global social justice needs.

The global community would more fully understand that the impact of runaway military spending on the development narrative is huge and 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 especially the SDGs.

It is time to call out the unsustainable scandal that is **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 excessive billions of tax-payers pounds, dollars and euros flowing into defence and arms industries.

This constitutes a massive loss of funds for real development and public investment, while the costs incurred to deal with post-conflict destruction also fall to nation states. 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*'.

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, the UK's development aspirations collide with its military ambition as both aid and military spending are tools of foreign policy (see recent CSSF, Panorama, GJN report). 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 offers us a moment where, as a nation with a place on all major international bodies, we are able to face up to this, put some honest truths out there and be 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 would, inevitably, see a major 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 increases 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 help build a movement for sustainable development and the achievement of the SDGs?

The Labour Party has a strong track record on ensuring ever more progressive international development policy-making and has often led the way globally. Its latest manifesto builds on this track record. In government, with courage, it can do even more and help 'paradigm shift' the hitherto unquestioned decoupling of international development and the consequences of foreign policy decisions and military spend/ action.

Like so many cross cutting issues, runaway military spending impacts on many of the 17 SDGs but there is a great deal of awareness raising that needs to be done for this to be more fully appreciated. **Labour can help advance new and radical thinking on this, both domestically and internationally, working with civil society, international institutions and progressive thinking governments.**

Peace, stability, human rights and effective governance based on the rule of law are important conduits for sustainable development. We are living in a world that is increasingly divided. Some regions enjoy sustained levels of peace,

security and prosperity while others fall into seemingly endless cycles of conflict and violence. Labour can continue to advocate that this is by no means inevitable and must be addressed in a meaningful way.

SDG 16 is tasked to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies. The Arms Trade Treaty is underway. But in truth, **neither the ATT nor SDG 16 go far enough, in much the same way that 0.7% was not enough and we needed to move forward to debt cancellation, trade and tax justice in order to start to address the fundamental structures that underpinned economic injustice and inequality.**

Taking the courageous political decision to tackle this issue head on would show brave, much hoped-for global leadership. With DFID taking the lead and working with the new *Dept for Peace and Disarmament*, as well as other key govt departments, radical new ideas can be developed.

3. In which SDG goals is the UK best placed to lead the way?

All the SDGs matter – both individually and collectively. **Our case is to ask that Labour rises to the challenge to start to look at many of the key SDGs through the prism of global (and runaway) military spending:** currently we have a global refugee crisis of a scale not seen since WW2, much of it driven by wars past and present (and in which UK foreign policy and military action has often played a pivotal role).

Meantime, many of the world's poorest countries and fastest growing economies (both measured in terms of GDP per capita) spend much more on their military than either on education or on health; excessive military spending impedes economic development (SDG 8) and significantly impacts on the efforts to reducing poverty (SDG 1) and hunger (SDG 2) and improving health (SDG 3) and education (SDG 4).

Moreover, the use of military vehicles – aircraft, ships, rockets, tanks, armoured vehicles – in exercises and military operations constitutes possibly the largest single global contributor to carbon emissions and climate change (SDG 13).

High military spending markedly increases the likelihood of wars and armed conflicts, which not only are a key driver of climate change but also disproportionately harm women and children (SDG 5). And of course, meanwhile, all this results in another truth: war is a source of great profit for those in the business of war including UK arms manufacturers.

The 12 targets within SDG 16 are wide-ranging and include those that relate to rule of law, corruption, accountability and transparency, access to justice and extended participation in democratic processes. **In relation to conflict there is one target that specifically references the arms trade. It reflects the**

work undertaken by civil society on the Arms Trade Treaty. The target to significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows by 2030. This is a good starting point. But when 70% of arms sales are made by the P5 members of the security council and those same five nations charged with keeping the peace of the world while the majority of their arms sales go to the global south, SDG 16 is sorely lacking.

4. How can Labour spend the aid budget in the most effective way to help achieve the SDGs?

In February 2016 the definition of foreign aid was changed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) after the UK and other countries lobbied to be allowed to use overseas aid budgets to support the military and security forces in fragile countries, as long as this still promotes development goals. Under the new rules, official aid can be used to support the military in fragile countries on issues that promote development, such as human rights and the prevention of sexual violence. It also said tackling violent extremism is now formally recognised as a development activity, with more than 90% of terrorist attacks occurring in states with weak governance and poor human rights records. It said the core principle of the overseas aid system remains unchanged, as an activity that must “support the economic development and welfare of a developing country as its main objective”

(i) To maximise funds available in the first place, a Labour government should reverse this change in definition - the line between military and civilian operations should not be blurred. The MoD and MI6 are already well-funded - there is no need to further enable our government to window-dress military assistance/arms sales as foreign aid for 'economic and social development.' As former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon said, 'the world is over-armed and peace is underfunded'.

(ii) Support as far as possible those grassroots movements working on structural change so that we move from 'aid' to real social change where power is challenged; civil society empowered and inequality called out and reversed.

(iii) plan for beyond 2030 now and build in ways to 'paradigm shift' on issues including runaway military spending, so we can road-map how to redirect inflated UK and other western military budget savings to national/international social need and the battle to reduce inequality.

Inequality between nations is one of the key driving factors of conflicts. By helping others develop, we will make ourselves safer. Recognising this, we will then be able to reduce spending and make military budgeting much more proportionate, relevant to real security threats (climate change, poverty) and sustainable.

(*See Five Percent Campaign below as a start to this thinking)

5. What would a feminist international development policy look like if it is to effectively challenge gender equality?

Civilians in general and women and girls in particular bear the burden of war. This has been evidenced for decades. Armed conflicts and militarism in one of the main drivers of gender inequality around the world and rape is a well-practised tool of conflict. A feminist international development policy would recognise that until and unless we address war and conflict and the many drivers that lead to war – **including the vast amounts of money spent on the tools of war – will we never, ever reach a truly pro-woman international development policy**

DB/HC June 2018

*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/>

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