

# CLIMATE CHANGE & EU FOREIGN, SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

*EU security and defence policy is neither addressing the military's role in climate change nor prioritising climate change in its security and defence policy*

A Briefing Paper

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**TIPPING POINT NORTH SOUTH**

A co-operative that supports and initiates creative, campaign-driven projects that advance the global social justice agenda

## INTRODUCTION

Historically, European nations' military spending has been central to re-enforcing power, poverty, unjust distribution of resources, economic and environmental collapse. The longstanding destructive role of western militaries is only matched by the historic harm caused by those same nations' corporate interests across the global south, notably through the extraction of resources. These commercial interests have been and remain a major cause of instability and armed conflict while developed nations grew rich on those resources.

How we face our past and re-make our future; how we establish equitable trading relations; how we put an end to poor people fleeing as economic, climate or conflict refugees and drowning in our EU waters, will only be fully addressed when we also put foreign, security and defence/military matters into that equation. *Peaceful* green prosperity for Europe, and our sisters and brothers across the global south, will remain elusive as long as the military-oil industry relationship remains intact, all powerful and unchallenged.

As the world's biggest institutional consumer of oil, the global military is a major driver of climate change.<sup>1</sup> But its growing contribution to our unfolding climate emergency is almost entirely hidden from view. It is not even obliged to report its carbon emissions, let alone curb them.<sup>2</sup>

Runaway military spending fuels climate change and drives conflicts across the world – exacerbating poverty, increasing insecurity and creating a global refugee crisis that has seen 68 million people flee their homes and livelihoods. The 'peace of mind' derived from a fossil-fuel driven military is – on many critical counts – no longer fit for the 21st century. Outdated notions of national security should now be replaced by the concept of 'global human security'.

The EU can lead the way on this as part of its GND thinking.

*As we face climate chaos and struggle with the fall-out of austerity, there are specific climate and human security related foreign and defence issues that need calling out.*

*We must call out the EU's military carbon footprint. How is it acceptable to call for net zero GHG emissions across all sectors while giving the military a 'free pass'?*

*EU Foreign and Security Policy and EU Security and Defence Policy must go beyond including climate change as just one of a list of threats but acknowledge it as a major, if not the major, urgent, threat to our collective human security.*

*We must call for a shift in EU military spending priorities to prioritise risk reduction, mitigation, and adaptation to climate breakdown, within the EU and overseas.*

*We must resist EU calls for ever increasing military budgets to advance the notion of an EU Army. Militarisation is not compatible with a progressive EU advancing solidarity based GND principles, nor does it advance our collective human security in the face of runaway climate change.*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/green-new-deal-plus/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.ipb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Green\\_Booklet\\_working\\_paper\\_17.09.2014.pdf](http://www.ipb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Green_Booklet_working_paper_17.09.2014.pdf)

*Exacerbating austerity: collectively, EU countries make up the second largest share of global military expenditure (\$280bn in 2018, 15% of the world's total) after the US (\$649bn).<sup>3</sup> While European citizens continue to suffer the consequences of austerity cuts to public services, EU Security and Defence Policy calls upon all EU nations to significantly increase their military spending and EU-funded defence research.<sup>4</sup> How is it right to make cuts to health, education, social security and housing while increasing funding to further expand on plans for an EU Army?*

U.S. Senate Bernie Sanders recently launched his \$13 trillion GND plan.<sup>5</sup> In it, he wants to redirect USA military budget to fund GND plans. He wants to '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.'

We in Europe need to take his lead. To ensure our European Green New Deal's economic, social and environmental gains are fully realised, we need *peace* to accompany – indeed enable – *green prosperity*.

## EU COMMON FOREIGN & SECURITY POLICY IS NOT 'CLIMATE CHANGE READY'

It could be argued that in addition to austerity and climate change, European citizens face another, connected, threat: that of *failing, out-dated security and defence thinking*.

## EU MILITARY CARBON FOOTPRINT

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. The EU is the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest military spender after the USA and is, by default, a major fossil fuel user. A carbon-neutral world demands we fully *decarbonise* our militaries.

Countries are not required to report greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel consumption by their militaries and defence industries, even to the UNFCCC/IPCC.<sup>6</sup> There is therefore scarce data to obtain a full picture of militaries' total contribution to climate change. However, in a landmark study by the Costs of War project of Brown University, it is estimated that the US military and the US defence industry together account for 6% of the total GHG emissions in the USA,<sup>7</sup> much larger contribution compared to aviation 3%.<sup>8</sup> This is mainly due to the military's over-reliance on fossil fuel and the high-carbon intensity of the defence industry.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/635533/EPRS\\_BRI\(2019\)635533\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/635533/EPRS_BRI(2019)635533_EN.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://berniesanders.com/the-green-new-deal/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/transparency-and-reporting/the-big-picture/what-is-transparency-and-reporting>

<sup>7</sup> <https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/ClimateChangeandCostofWar>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles/fast-facts-transportation-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

EU countries collectively have the second largest military spending<sup>9</sup> and the second largest defence industry in the world<sup>10</sup>. Even though there is hardly any equivalent study on European militaries due to a lack of relevant data and statistics, the absence of EU data is not an excuse for us to turn a blind eye to this omission since we now know the enormous scale of EU military/defence GHG emissions through correlation with excess military spending from American studies. This omission is doubly unacceptable since it cannot be left out of European countries' strategies to prevent and mitigate climate breakdown. The EU should, at the minimum, require member states to come clean about their militaries' and defence industries' significant contributions to climate change. Furthermore, EU foreign & security policy, in line with its development commitments, should be consistent and recognize the need to promote climate justice from now on, acknowledging its collective role in environmental and economic damages arising from its past actions.

It is estimated that US military between 2001 and 2017 in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and Syria generated over 400 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent war-related emissions — roughly equivalent to the greenhouse emissions of almost 85 million cars in one year.<sup>11</sup> However, many EU countries also participated significantly in these often illegitimate, deeply unpopular wars. There are other ongoing current conflicts that some EU countries are engaged in, notably Libya and Yemen. In addition to human casualties as well as social, economic and environmental destruction caused by these wars, where is EU's accountability for the climate injustice caused as a result of all this by its member states?

Given all this, and while European citizens face ever-greater threats from climate change, EU bodies tasked with shaping defence policy appear to have never come across the phrase 'sustainable security'. While, of course, the various strands of climate change threat are acknowledged, there is barely any detailed thought given addressing climate change as a major, if not *the* major, threat to EU citizens.

Nor is there a single reporting mechanism for EU countries to report GHG emissions of their national gas-guzzling militaries, thus turning a collective blind eye to their militaries and defence industries' destructive role in climate breakdown. Incredibly, EU Security and Defence Policy omits to factor in climate change as a major (man-made) threat to human security.<sup>12</sup>

As UK-based international security expert Professor Paul Rogers accurately describes it, the west has an 'obsolete security paradigm.'<sup>13</sup>

For EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and Common Security and Defence Policy, real, detailed, meaningful and well funded policy on climate change is a very big elephant in the room.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.sipri.org/databases/armstransfers>

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<https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/files/cow/imce/papers/2019/Pentagon%20Fuel%20Use.%20Climate%20Change%20and%20the%20Costs%20of%20War%20Final.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/35285/towards-stronger-eu-security-and-defence\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/35285/towards-stronger-eu-security-and-defence_en)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/the-key-to-global-security-its-not-just-about-security/>

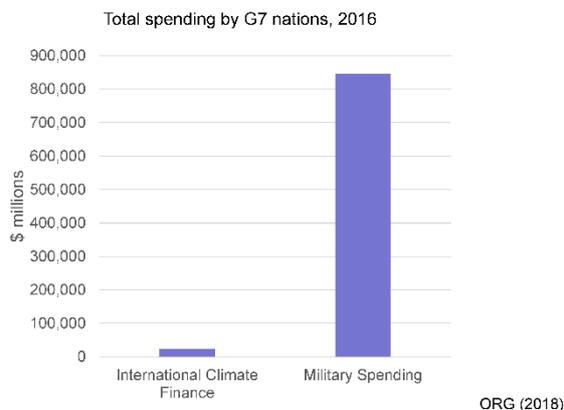
## EU'S MILITARY CARBON FOOTPRINT & THE GLOBAL SOUTH

As the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest military spending entity, EU's national militaries are a major consumer of fossil fuel, contributing significantly to climate change – climate change which we know has had and will continue to have, the greatest impact on nations of the global south, which in itself, is deeply at odds with that part of EU Foreign and Security policy addressing the EU's international development activity. Even in those instances where the EU are a part of humanitarian and/or peacekeeping missions, the EU itself may well have played a role in the crisis – whether through military intervention or its contribution to climate change.

This does not sit well with EU policy on international development and commitment for nations to achieve the 0.7% ODA/GNI target.

The tables below illustrate the stark reality of how those EU nations in the G7 prioritise military spending vs climate-related spending.<sup>14</sup>

### 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)

## CHANGING PRIORITIES AND DIRECTION OF EU FOREIGN, SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY

*The EU's Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) has many dimensions. Over the past few years, the EU and its Member States put in place a set of new measures and tools to increase the effectiveness of their actions.*

*Diplomacy, humanitarian aid, development cooperation, climate action, human rights, economic support and trade policy are all part of the EU's toolbox for global security and peace. These different instruments are combined in a specific way fitting the particular circumstances of each crisis or situation. This tailor-made, multi-faceted approach – continuously adjusted to evolving conditions – is the EU's so-called Integrated Approach as presented in the EU Global Strategy.<sup>15</sup>*

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-07/SGR\\_Military-carbon-bootprint\\_London19.pdf](https://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-07/SGR_Military-carbon-bootprint_London19.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/35285/towards-stronger-eu-security-and-defence\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/35285/towards-stronger-eu-security-and-defence_en)

The EU has a necessarily complex set of bodies which oversee and implement EU-wide policy on all matters of common foreign, security and defence policy. This takes the form of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), which is the EU's joint foreign and security policy, designed to resolve conflicts and foster international understanding, based on diplomacy and respect for international rules.<sup>16</sup> Trade, humanitarian aid, and development cooperation also play an important part in the EU's international role.

The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is the security and defence policy for the EU.<sup>17</sup> It forms an integral part of the EU's CFSP. From it flow many departments and bodies, key among them the European Defence Fund (EDF) and its Permanent structured cooperation on defence and security (PESCO); European Defence Action Plan; European Defence Agency.

The EU has no standing army, so relies on ad hoc forces contributed by EU countries. The EU can send missions to the world's trouble spots; to monitor and preserve law and order, participate in peacekeeping efforts or provide humanitarian aid to affected populations.

However, the EU wants this to change - to move from being a soft to a hard power

*'In this fragile world, soft power is not enough: we must enhance our credibility in security and defence. To respond to external crises, build our partners' capacities and protect Europe, Member States must channel a sufficient level of expenditure to defence, make the most efficient use of resources, and meet the collective commitment of 20% of defence budget spending devoted to the procurement of equipment and Research & Technology. Capabilities should be developed with maximum interoperability.'*<sup>18</sup>

This is illustrated in new spending plans and directions to EU countries. For example, participating countries in PESCO *agree to cooperate to achieve approved objectives in security and defence, committing to 'more binding common commitments' in the 5 areas set out in Article 2 of Protocol 10.*<sup>19</sup> Particularly among them, "**Defence equipment investment:** regularly increase defence budgets; increase defence investment expenditure to 20% of total defence spending; increase joint and collaborative strategic defence capability projects; increase spending on defence research and technology to 2% of total defence spending."

In April 2019 MEPs signed-off a deal establishing the multi-billion European Defence Fund, giving up parliamentary oversight of the EU's military subsidies programme. According to plans, approved by EU lawmakers, the EDF is set to receive an estimated €13 billion in the EU's next multi-annual financial framework (MFF) and will finance weapons research projects.<sup>20</sup>

The European Peace Facility (EPF), another new fund, was proposed in 2018. If adopted it will spend €10.5 billion between 2021-2027 on activities that potentially include providing lethal weapons to armed forces in third countries.<sup>21</sup> In January 2019, the European Peacebuilding Liaison office, a platform of 37 European non-governmental organisations (NGOs), NGO

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<sup>16</sup> [https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/foreign-security-policy\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/topics/foreign-security-policy_en)

<sup>17</sup> [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/chapter/foreign\\_and\\_security\\_policy/2505.html?root=2505](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/summary/chapter/foreign_and_security_policy/2505.html?root=2505)

<sup>18</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs\\_review\\_web\\_0.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/LSU/?uri=CELEX%3A32017D2315>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/news/eu-lawmakers-rubber-stamp-european-defence-fund-give-up-parliamentary-veto/>

<sup>21</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/46285/european-peace-facility-eu-budget-fund-build-peace-and-strengthen-international-security\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/46285/european-peace-facility-eu-budget-fund-build-peace-and-strengthen-international-security_en)

networks and think tanks working globally to prevent violent conflict and to build peace, wrote to the EU Political and Security Committee:

*“We have concerns and questions about the proposed EPF, including but not limited to the military ‘Train & Equip’ component and the possibility of it being used to fund the provision of weapons and ammunition, and the payment of soldiers’ salaries... We believe that the EU has a huge potential to distinguish itself as a global peace actor. However, while the name of the proposed EPF implies that it will contribute to ‘peace’, we have two pressing questions: How will it contribute to increasing human security in conflict-affected countries and regions? What would be the added value of providing lethal equipment to partner countries’ militaries? Several components of the proposed EPF are **untested areas** for the EU and the proposal fails to mitigate adequately the serious risks involved in their implementation.”<sup>22</sup>*

Initiatives such as these signal a fundamental change of the European project from peace-building to readiness for (defensive) war. There has been much publicised pressure, especially from the United States, that EU-NATO nations must significantly increase their military spending every year to move closer to their pledge to spend 2% of their GDP on defence.<sup>23</sup>

The more money for the military-industrial-oil complex, the more carbon for climate breakdown.

## ALTERNATIVE THINKING

There is a growing movement opposing EU calls for increased military spending and increased militarisation. It also addresses the need to ‘green’ EU Foreign and Security Policy.

MEP Sabine Lösing, Vice-Chair of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence, has argued “the European Defence Fund is the end of the civilian nature of the EU budget,”<sup>24</sup> and therefore, the establishment of the EDF and the broader militarization of the Union should be causes for concern for every citizen.

Johanna Nyman and Marianne Kettunen, policy analysts at the Institute for European Environmental Policy, argued that ‘climate change and ecosystem degradation are significant security threats. The European Union should take urgent action to address these as a part of its foreign and security policy.... A number of EU Member States are emerging as leaders on climate, environment and security. The momentum to link climate and environment with the global security agenda and to move from thought to action, demonstrating EU leadership, is now’.<sup>25</sup>

While EU CFSP and CSDP have – inevitably – recognised climate change as posing security threats, they have only ‘dipped their toe’ in the water: they have a long way to go if they are to

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<sup>22</sup> <http://eplo.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/EPLO-Letter-to-PSC-on-the-European-Peace-Facility.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.euronews.com/2019/03/14/nato-pledge-which-european-countries-spend-over-2-of-gdp-on-defence>

<sup>24</sup> <https://iraklis-oikonomou.blogspot.com/2019/04/an-interview-with-mep-sabine-losing-on.html>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.euractiv.com/section/climate-environment/opinion/greening-the-eus-foreign-and-security-policy/>

be seen to be placing it where it belongs – at the centre of the EU’s climate and human security agenda.<sup>26</sup>

‘There is a close link between the environmental underpinnings of human security and national security,’ argue Johanna Nyman and Marianne Kettunen.

But where is the detail in the EU CFSP plan?

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The new EC President Elect will need to ensure the EU integrates *progressive* policies across the board – including CFSP and CFDP – if she is to see the EU realize this vision. The EU can never be a climate neutral continent if it does not address the military and from that, put a new global green human security paradigm at the heart of its policy-making.

*“I want the European Green Deal to become Europe’s hallmark,”*

*European Commission President-elect Ursula von der Leyen, has tasked her second-in-command with overseeing Europe’s goal of achieving climate neutrality by mid-century.*

*“At the heart is our commitment to becoming the world’s first climate-neutral continent”*

*Frans Timmermans is appointed Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal and Climate Action Commissioner .*

### **EU Foreign and Security Policy, EU Security and Defence Policy must**

- acknowledge climate change as a major, if not *the* major, urgent, threat to our collective security
- make a shift in military spending priorities from traditional expenditure to addressing mitigation, adaptation, early warning and risk reduction to climate emergencies within the EU and overseas.
- lead the way on adopting the findings of the recent report of the Global Commission on Adaptation – major funding for mitigation and adaptation within EU and internationally<sup>27</sup>
- place climate and environmental diplomacy centre-stage in EU diplomatic activity and to apply this support to all UN climate initiatives linked to development, conflict, human security including UN 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda
- put (increasingly climate affected) peace-building, peace-keeping and conflict prevention centre stage

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<sup>26</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs\\_review\\_web\\_0.pdf](https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/eugs_review_web_0.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> <https://gca.org/global-commission-on-adaptation/report>

- reverse EU funds allocated to promotion of an EU Army; reverse call to EU nations for increased military budgets; and remove the demand on NATO members to spend 2% of their GDP on defence

Militarisation is not compatible with a progressive EU advancing solidarity based GND principles; we need diversification of jobs from arms industry to green economy; the EU should make peace-keeping, peace-building and humanitarian response it's 'niche'.<sup>28</sup>

- lead the way on foreign , security, defence and international development policies fit for our post-carbon, climate changed world and with civil society across development, environment and security

Global human security should supersede national interest and the climate emergency must not become a pretext for ever greater security measures targeting the world's poorest fleeing climate chaos. The EU needs a genuinely *progressive* defence policy that generates fresh thinking on how taxes directed to military spending should reflect a different type of security policy-making that delivers equity, human security, green jobs and minimisation and mitigation of climate breakdown and ever greater climate refugee crisis .

## European Union to

- come clean on its collective military carbon emissions and to adopt measures across the EU 27/8 that direct EU **governments to take oil out of the military-oil industry relationship** surrendering their significant role in driving catastrophic climate change and attendant human suffering – **decarbonise member states' militaries**.

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.

- implement drastic cuts to excessive EU national military spending (nearly \$300bn per annum) and redirect to GND needs; climate mitigation and disaster risk reduction; green economy, renewable energy and energy access; peacekeeping and peace –building
- reject wholesale the 'soft to hard power' direction and instead, lead the world on truly progressive, green, sustainable, equitable foreign and security policies that places human security – peaceful green prosperity – at the heart of its mission.

Deborah Burton & Ho-Chih Lin  
15/09/2019

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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.newsdeeply.com/peacebuilding/community/2018/06/15/peacebuilding-should-be-central-to-the-e-u-s-global-strateg>

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