

**INTERNATIONAL PHYSICIANS FOR THE
PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR**

23rd World Congress – Mombasa, Kenya
April 2023

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Title of Resolution: Global Call for Climate Justice and Disarmament

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Be it resolved that:

The climate crisis and the danger of a nuclear war pose the most imminent threats to human health in the 21st century. Root causes of the climate crisis lie in the overexploitation of planet earth because of fossil fuel production and consumption patterns including military defence, nuclear weapons, and an ongoing global arms race. The reduction of military carbon emissions and environmental impact of weapons production, military exercises and war should therefore be included as a binding commitment in international climate agreements and national climate targets. Governments should reduce and re-allocate military spending to finance climate action and foster peace and planetary health. We need diplomacy, cooperation, solidarity, justice and peace to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The International Council of IPPNW therefore resolves that:

IPPNW call for appropriate measures to reduce military spending and eventually eliminate military carbon emissions worldwide through disarmament:

Reasons for above

Militaries and militarisation perpetuate the climate crisis and environmental breakdown. Health equity will not be possible if climate crisis, environmental breakdown and the systems that produce them persist, as has been described within the framework of planetary health.¹

¹ The concept of planetary health describes the interconnections between human, animal and ecosystem health and encompasses a broad, transdisciplinary understanding of the influences on, and conditions for, human health today and in the future

Both the upstream industry of arms and weapons production and its activities from building maintenance to military manoeuvres emit greenhouse gases and pollute air, soil and groundwater with chemicals and toxins. Scientists estimate that the total military carbon footprint is approximately 5.5% of global emissions.²

Yet it remains difficult to quantify the exact contributions of the military-industrial sector as their reporting has been on a voluntary basis, under the Paris Climate Agreement. Governments fail to provide detailed plans on how to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 while investing in new fossil fuel-powered weapons systems such as fighter jets, warships and armoured vehicles. The modernisation of nuclear weapons and the ongoing nuclear arms race put our planet in danger of a nuclear ecocide.

Militarisation ultimately leads to war which spirals further (nuclear) militarisation. The deployment of and destruction caused by weapons, vehicles and fighter jets, the targeting and destruction of energy infrastructure, resulting in forest fires and reconstruction efforts in the aftermath, all impact on the climate and the environment. If a nuclear war broke out, it would have an immediate and devastating effect: scientists have found out that even a “limited” nuclear war, quite conceivable if the war in Ukraine were to escalate, would cause a significant drop in global temperature and lead to mass starvation.³

Nonetheless in 2021, global military spending rose to \$2.1 trillion (USD)⁴. The five largest military spenders are the United States, China, India, United Kingdom and Russia. All of them are nuclear weapon states. Four of these countries are also the largest greenhouse gas emitters. Raw materials and precious resources that are needed for a just energy transition to renewables, for climate neutral mobility and health care, are channelled to the military. A reduction and re-allocation of military spending to provide finances for climate mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage could achieve climate justice. One year’s military spending by the top 10 military spenders would pay for promised international climate finance for 15 years (at \$100 billion per annum).⁵

It would also take responsibility for the colonial continuities that link both the fight for climate justice and for a nuclear weapon-free world. Through our work on assistance for nuclear test survivors, particularly in the Pacific region, we have recognised the need for democracy and equal attention for the human security interests of people in both the Global North and South, instead of being complicit with the nuclear military security paradigm of a small minority of industrialised nations. This is the foundation on which the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is built. In the same way, the hunger for energy and increased production in the global North, safe-guarded through an equally resource-hungry military,, is driving the climate catastrophe and endangering the security of people in most affected areas, primarily in the Global South.

2 Stuart Parkinson, Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR) with Linsey Cottrell, Conflict and Environment Observatory (CEOBS) 2022: Estimating the Military’s Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

3 IPPNW, 2022: Nuclear Famine. Even a „limited“ nuclear war could cause abrupt climate disruption and global starvation.

4 SIPRI Yearbook 2022

5 Tipping point North South, Stop Wapenhandel, TNI, 2022: Climate Collateral. How military spending accelerates climate breakdown.

We, as physicians, perceive the great danger that ongoing nuclear and conventional militarisation and military spending will impede our efforts for survival of the human species and health equity in the face of the climate catastrophe. Rather than falling back into confrontation as is reminiscent of the Cold War, we need diplomacy, cooperation, solidarity, justice and peace to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

As a first step, **all militaries need to report their emissions** using consistent, unambiguous, transparent, and robust data collection methodologies. Military emissions should be **included as a mandatory part of reporting under the UN climate framework**. Countries with large militaries in particular need to make **concise and committed national plans** to reduce and eventually eliminate their military carbon emissions and **re-allocate their military spending towards climate action** in order to meet the 1.5-degree limit. **Joining the TPNW** is an important step towards that goal. Countries with small militaries should be encouraged and enabled to fund peaceful climate adaptation rather than militarisation. Planetary health and climate justice should be guiding principles in national security agendas and international treaties to achieve and secure health and well-being for all within the planetary boundaries.

Describe how this resolution might be implemented and by whom:

In order to achieve the goal, IPPNW will strengthen its public education on this issue and exert influence on both national and international political decision-makers. The federation will globally advocate for these steps before the next and succeeding COPs. All affiliates may take action in their own country towards that goal.

Estimate for amount of staff time and resources required to implement this resolution:

Minimal staff time will be required, mainly for coordination of activities and communication between activists.

Estimated expenses and sources of funding:

Minimal cost for shipment of information material.