



THE URGENT NEED TO STOP MILITARISM FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

JUNE 2026

KEY MESSAGES

1. The UNFCCC has failed to address militarism as a driver of the climate crisis. Wars, weapons production, stockpiling, and military expansion are driving emissions, deepening environmental racism, and undermining climate justice.

2. Militaries are major greenhouse gas (GHG) emitters, yet states can still exclude or obscure military emissions, creating a major accountability gap. Governments must commit to transparent reporting and include verifiable military emissions-reduction targets in updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

3. Ever-rising military spending means higher emissions and less finance for climate action. While climate finance commitments remain unmet, Annex II states continue to expand their military budgets. They must redirect resources toward mitigation, adaptation, and addressing loss and damage in ways that support community-led solutions and finance a just transition. Money for weapons must be diverted to realize climate justice.



Background

At COP29, the Presidency launched the Baku Climate and Peace Action Hub, recognising the importance of peace-positive climate action in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. While welcome, it failed to address one of the most urgent drivers of climate fragility: militarism itself. We are living in a time of rising militarism with the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people, numerous invasions and wars, including in Iran and Lebanon, famine and genocide in Sudan, and the ongoing war in Ukraine and aggression in Venezuela and Cuba. There are currently more armed conflicts than at any time since the end of the Second World War. Militarism is incompatible with climate justice – it contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, robs resources away from essential public services, and perpetuates systems of violence and inequality, including heightened risks of gender-based violence that disproportionately harm women, girls, and non-binary people.¹

The climate crisis is increasingly presented by states as a “threat multiplier,” allowing them to respond with the military as a “solution.” However, it is essential to understand that the military industrial complex is heavily accountable to and that the fundamental root causes of the climate crisis, considering factors including but not limited to imperialism, colonialism, and patriarchy.

Militarism and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Militaries are responsible for an estimated 5.5% of global emissions, more than the emissions of all 54 African states combined. If global militaries were a country, they would be the fourth-largest emitter. Yet military emissions reporting under the UNFCCC remains voluntary, leaving major gaps in transparency and accountability.

Estimates of 5.5% also exclude much of the emissions from active warfare. It is estimated that the four years of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine have contributed to global emissions equal to the annual emissions of France or half of Germany’s, and the climate damage caused by this war amounts to over US\$57 billion.² Further research estimates that the emissions from the first 15 months of Israel’s bombardment of Gaza and reconstruction were greater than 36 individual countries’ annual emissions.³ There was also an attempt to quantify the climate impacts of Israel’s occupation of Palestine: in monetary terms, military- and conflict-emissions-related climate reparations owed to the Palestinian people as a result of climate costs from Israel’s occupation since 1948 were estimated to be at least US\$148 billion.⁴ This figure, however, does not capture the profound non-economic harms, including lives lost, toll on physical and mental health, forcible displacement, dispossession, environmental degradation, and intergenerational impacts.

Without mandatory and comprehensive military emissions reporting, the full climate cost of war remains hidden, and states avoid accountability. Governments cannot meet emissions targets without reducing military emissions. COP31 must deliver transparent reporting and verifiable reduction targets.

Militarism and Climate Finance

In Baku, the NCQG was set at US\$300 billion with efforts to scale finance to US\$1.3 trillion. This is in stark contrast to ever-rising global military expenditure. Global military expenditure rose to US\$2.88 trillion in 2025, the eleventh consecutive annual increase. This suggests that public money is available to invest in climate action, but is instead being used to fuel increased militarism.

Developed countries claimed to have finally surpassed the US\$100 billion climate finance goal in 2022, but the latest Oxfam report reveals the true value – just US\$28 billion. Developed countries have been spending, on average, 30 times as much on their military budgets as on international climate finance. This ratio is only set to get worse; since 2015, global military spending has been breaking historical highs year on year, while developed countries are significantly reducing official development assistance (ODA), including climate finance. These states must be made to be responsible, transparent, and reparative.

Developed countries and financial institutions continue financing war crimes, illegal occupation, and genocide, sustaining a violent global order rooted in militarism, extraction, and impunity. There is an urgent need for a new global standard on ethical finance that ends financial support for the machinery of war and redirects resources toward reparations, ecological restoration, and care economies.

Feminists demand a stop to war and militarism for humanity, climate justice, and the reallocation of military spending to support women and community-led solutions and provide resources for climate change mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage.

¹ Siân Herbert: Links between gender-based violence and outbreaks of violent conflict (2014) <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a089a5ed915d622c000325/hdq1169.pdf>

² Initiative on GHG accounting of war: Climate damage caused by Russia's war in Ukraine: 24 February 2022 – 23 February 2025. Full assessment (2025) - <https://en.ecoaction.org.ua/climate-damage-4-years-numbers.html>

³ Neimark, Benjamin et al., War on the Climate: A Multitemporal Study of Greenhouse Gas Emissions of the Israel-Gaza Conflict (2025) <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5274707>

⁴ Tipping Point North South and the Palestinian Institute for Climate Strategy: Military & conflict-related emissions & climate reparations for Palestine (2025) <https://transformdefence.org/publication/climatereparationsforpalestine/>

⁵ SIPRI: Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2024 (2025) <https://doi.org/10.55163/AVEC8366>

⁶ Oxfam and CARE: Climate Finance Shadow Report 2025: Analysing progress on climate finance under the Paris Agreement (2025), <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/climate-finance-shadow-report-2025-analysing-progress-on-climate-finance-under-621735/>

⁷ TNI: Climate Collateral (2022) <https://www.tni.org/files/2022-11/Climate%20Collateral%20Report%20-%20TNI%20-%20final%20web.pdf>

**THIS SITUATION HAS REACHED
A NEW AND DEEPLY TROUBLING LOW.**

Read more at womensgenderclimate.org.





**WOMEN * GENDER
CONSTITUENCY**