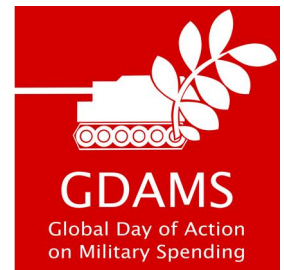


14 April 2014 - Global Day of Action on Military Spending

Call to Action



In the latest figures, world military expenditure reached an all-time high of \$1.75 trillion. The UK ranked fourth, spending £40 billion. The government protects the military budget, while subjecting vital public services to drastic spending cuts.

For too long we have lived with the myth that high military spending maintains peace, creates jobs and combats terrorism. This myth is promoted by governments and by multinational arms companies who benefit from the global arms trade politically and economically. It prevents the money being spent on tackling real challenges such as relieving poverty, improving health, and protecting the environment.

We come together now, as people concerned with peace, social justice and environmental justice, to call for a new approach to our common security that will tackle the real problems of our world; an approach which addresses the root causes of conflict, including environmental problems, inequality and access to resources. Military responses, with their real and hidden costs, do not help; they threaten human security.

We call for:

- military spending to be shifted towards social and environmental needs. These needs should take priority over aircraft carriers, long range strike aircraft, armed drones, weapons exports and weapons of mass destruction.
- no replacement of the UK's nuclear weapons system, Trident. Redirecting its cost alone could prevent many of the key public sector cuts in the UK.
- a new thinking involving civil society and government to create a clear programme of action for spending, research and investment to build sustainable, common security at national and international levels.
- the huge subsidy to the arms industry to be redirected towards renewable energy and energy saving measures, allowing diversification and conversion of the arms industry, and enabling our public resources to tackle a huge cause of human insecurity, climate change.
- grassroots groups, networks, and organisations to work together across their 'issue' boundaries, to share experiences and expertise that will inspire others to work for a common security.

Suggestions for planning actions

- Choose a **good focal point** for your action. Local civic centre or Town Hall? A place that is under threat of cuts? A local military base or company involved in arms production?
- **Take photos** to share with others, to tweet, to put on Facebook and send to the GDAMS website.
- Invite your **local radio/papers** along and make sure there are good photo opportunities.
- Contact **local members of the groups who support the Day of Action** to get them involved. Showing a breadth of support will strengthen the message.

Get people together for a strategy meeting to plan a local action and response.

Here you can see an action that took place in London last year - they may help to stimulate your own ideas!
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/paxchristiuk/sets/72157633252050168/> and
<http://demilitarize.org.uk/news/>

and here images that convey a message to challenge military spending

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/paxchristiuk/sets/72157638723267415/>

Actions

Interactive stalls and actions

These give people an opportunity to say where they would re-direct a military budget. Simple props are all you need: labels or mini-banner of key budget areas/coin cards/ sweet or large jam-jars labelled with budget areas/buttons/signs that invite people to the activity.

Have leaflets to give out with contact details of your own group and some of the main GDAMS support groups and key information about military spending, unmet social and environmental needs. Good to link in with a local concern: closure of a hospital; impact of flooding; cuts to schools and with national concerns: international aid budgets; investment in renewable energy and the Environment Agency.

You could also have the *Rethink Trident* statement or *Scrap Trident* petition for people to sign up to (see below)

These activities could relate to unmet national and international needs and:

- Global military spending: \$1.7 trillion
- Or to our national military spending £40 billion
- Or to Trident nuclear weapons spending £100 billion

The People's Budget

Members of Yorkshire CND organised a street-stall to give passers-by a chance to put their 'coin' on their area of choice (see images here <http://on.fb.me/1gkE4Y9>)

You could create a simpler version using fabric for the themes health, education etc... and coins or bars of gold made from cardboard

There is an excellent project *The People's Budget* which campaigns for a greater say in how local budgets are used. Their website gives lots of clear practical information on working at local level.

<http://www.thepeoplesbudget.org.uk/>



Give Peace a Budget - How would you spend £40 billion?

Pax Christi organised a similar activity for young people using sweet-jars labelled health, environment, education, overseas aid etc... and buttons.

Each person visiting is given 4 buttons (each worth £10 billion) to place into jars. At the end of the day/session there is a 'count-up' to see how the money is distributed. Climate change and education came out tops!

Useful animation here on what you could spend £100 billion on

<http://www.cnduk.org/scraptrident/>



Street theatre

This is a simple way of attracting attention and making a point. It does not have to be sophisticated... something short and witty is what you want! You can repeat it again and again as new people pass by.

CAAT, CND and Pax Christi members dramatized a 'game show' outside the House of Commons to show the lack of continuity between the government's priorities and that of the people. A student needing tuition fees received instead military hardware. An injured man received an aircraft carrier instead of medical treatment. An engineer seeking funding for a renewable energy project was left disappointed when she got given money for military projects instead.



Petitions and sign-ups

Rethink Trident Statement

If you agree with millions of others that the government should scrap plans to spend over £100bn replacing Trident with a new generation of nuclear weapons then please sign the Rethink Trident statement. You can sign the statement at the website and print it out and invite people to sign. The more people who sign, the more pressure will build on the government to act. <http://www.rethinktrident.org.uk/>

Scrap Trident Petition



The government says Britain has no money. It is cutting billions from public spending on health care, education, welfare and services and devastating peoples' lives. Yet at the same time it is spending billions every year on Trident nuclear weapons and plans to spend over £100 billion on a replacement for Trident. Sign the petition at <http://www.cnduk.org/scraptrident/>. You can also download a paper copy of the Petition here <http://www.cnduk.org/images/stories/petition2013.pdf>

Meetings and discussions

Organise a meeting to engage the local community and make links with local needs/local agencies working on poverty/environment/social programmes. Use this as a chance for publicity: local radio/TV and press are always looking for stories!

- You could show one of the DVDs listed below. They may also give you ideas for events/visual presentations.
- You could invite your local MP to come to discuss how budget priorities are set. Invite representatives from local social or environmental projects that are facing cuts so that they can put their case.

Conflict and Climate Change from the Movement for the Abolition of War. Several prominent political leaders, scientists and academics voice their concerns on the need to tackle climate change and reduce the risk of conflict and war in the 18-minute DVD.

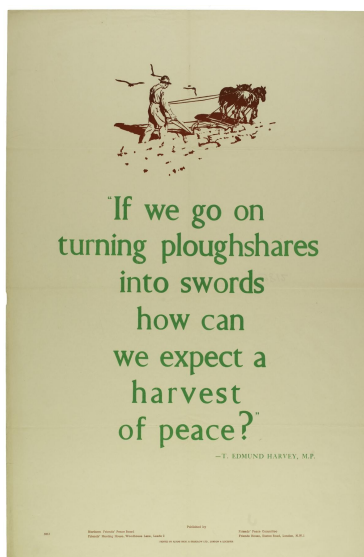
- See taster here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1u3EGSJ68x4&feature=youtu.be>
- Order here: <http://www.abolishwar.org.uk/resources.php>

Give Peace a Budget: Seven ways to spend \$1.7 trillion. A Pax Christi DVD where a doctor, head teacher, politician, environmentalist, trades unionist, student, development worker outline how they would spend the military /Trident budget

- See here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MBGeBlsiSMU> or you can order from Pax Christi for £5.00. www.paxchristi.org.uk

Churches and faith communities

You can use all of the above to raise your concern as a community and bring this added dimension to your event/meeting/discussion



- Use the quotation, images and question sheet to engage a congregation in reflecting on the scriptural/ and church teaching links with this topic of investment in life-giving projects in place of military projects. This is on the GDAMS UK website.
 - Reproduce some of the quotations in a church or community newsletter or magazine
 - What images, symbols and teachings about a peaceful, just world do our spiritual traditions give us? How might these be used to promote GDAMS
 - Arrange a meeting with your local Churches Together or Interfaith network where each tradition speaks of their teaching on war, the mis-use of resources and what true security means. Invite your local MP or Councillor along to share their perspective on the challenge to invest in local needs rather than on militarism.
- Invite members of a congregation or community to sign up to the Rethink Trident or the Scrap Trident petition

Supporting Organisations

- Action AWE
- Article 36
- Bangor & Ynys Môn Peace & Justice/ Heddwch a Chyfiawnder Bangor & Ynys Môn, North Wales
- Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation
- Campaign Against Arms Trade
- Christian Ecology Link
- CND
- CND Cymru
- Columban Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation
- Conscience
- Drone Wars UK
- Ethical Consumer Magazine
- Faslane Peace Camp
- Fellowship of Reconciliation (England)
- Friends of Lebanon
- Green Party
- Jubilee Debt Campaign
- Kingston Peace Council/CND
- Medact
- Movement for the Abolition of War
- Medact
- Musicians without Borders
- National Justice and Peace Network
- Network for Peace
- Northern Friends Peace Board
- Nuclear Consulting Group
- Pax Christi
- Quaker Peace & Social Witness
- Radical Statistics
- Scientists for Global Responsibility
- Scrap Trident Coalition
- Scottish WILPF
- South Somerset Peace Group
- Stop the War
- Student Christian Movement
- Transition Heathrow
- Trident Ploughshares
- War on Want
- War Resisters International
- Woodcraft Folk
- Wool Against Weapons
- World Development Movement
- International website for the Global Day of Action on Military Spending

Links to all of these can be found on the GDAMS UK website

Websites

GDAMS UK: <http://demilitarize.org.uk/> and GDAMS International <http://demilitarize.org/>