

FOR RESET- EVIDENCE SUBMISSION 24/07/20

Deborah Burton & Dr. Ho-Chih Lin [Tipping Point North South](http://tippingpointnorthsouth.org). TPNS is a non-profit co-op that works primarily on international social justice issues through support for film (including [We Are Many](#); [Open Bethlehem](#)); production of events (eg [Bethlehem Unwrapped Wall & Festival](#) at St James's Piccadilly); development of campaign projects ([GND Plus](#)/ [Five Percent](#) on global military spending; [Make Apartheid History](#) Palestine). TPNS founder members are former Christian Aid campaigners on debt, trade, tax and climate justice.

This evidence relates to our work on the role and responsibility of the UK/Global military in climate change; the need for this issue to be more widely known about; the urgent need to act upon both emissions and runaway expenditure; for this matter to be included in GND thinking – **GND Plus** as we describe it.

Our evidence is not anonymous or confidential. We would be happy to present evidence in an online evidence session

PART ONE Lessons from Covid-19 - Questions 4&5

4. What has the pandemic revealed about how we make decisions in the UK and how well it enables us to respond to complex challenges?

The pandemic has revealed that the narrow, arguably out-dated, definitions of 'defence and security' has been found wanting; that this resulted in the failure to act on the known national security threat of pandemic in the face of evidence (with attendant questions concerning funding); and that the need for civil society to think hard and fresh about what national security (or better still, human safety) should look like, is pressing. If we can look these major shortcomings in the face then we will be better equipped to respond to the (urgent) complex challenges in the future, making outcomes for both the climate emergency and reversing social inequality (especially as witnessed in health outcomes) better.

"We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

Rev Martin Luther King Jnr

COVID-19 & THE WARTIME METAPHOR

The UK has lost many more lives due to mismanaging COVID-19 than civilians were killed in during WW2 blitz and in a shorter period of time - 40,000 civilians died in the seven-month period between September 1940 and May 1941¹.

Doctors, nurses, care workers are 'frontline' in the 'battle' against COVID-19. Keir Starmer described the delay in implementing 'track and trace' as a 'hole in our defences'.²

The UK government identified pandemic as a Tier 1 security threat in 2010 and 2015 National Security Strategies (NSS). The risk of human pandemic disease "remains one of the highest we face", reported the 2010 NSS. "There is a high probability of another influenza pandemic occurring and, based on a range of data, possible impacts of a future pandemic could be that up to one half of the UK population becomes infected, resulting in between 50,000 and 750,000 deaths in the UK, with corresponding disruption to everyday life." During this time, however, little was done to turn the plan into action, whether in terms of infrastructure preparation or raising public awareness to deal with this particular threat, compared to other Tier One threats such as terrorism and wars.

General Sir Nick Carter made no mention of either pandemic or climate change at the annual RUSI Lecture in December 2019. Included in the report from Professor Michael Clarke of RUSI:³

"The Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) at his annual RUSI lecture has been widely reported as giving a sobering view of the security challenges that Britain faces in the coming decade..."

A resurgence of great power politics, a series of nasty trouble spots around the world, demographic trends that tend towards instability, and the disappearing lines between open conflict, civil strife, social and economic subversion...

It is necessary to embrace the "fourth industrial revolution" and genuinely integrate the "sunrise technologies" – robotics, artificial intelligence, quantum computing and other disruptive technologies – into our security thinking, rather than to leave them as the interesting afterthoughts for which there was never enough actual cash to exploit properly."

However, speaking of the pandemic in April 2020, General Sir Nick Carter told us:⁴

"I would say that in all my more than 40 years of service this is the single greatest logistic challenge that I've come across. I'll just give you a scale of the problem; in the 25 days since we've started working together with the NHS, they've gone from some 240 customers they deliver to normally to nearly 50,000 customers. This has involved creating 260,000ft of distribution warehouse space – that's nearly four football fields' worth – and some 38 additional delivery routes per day. That's the equivalent to driving three times around the world. That is a major logistic challenge."

It seems those in the UK (and other notable leading defence spending nations like the USA) charged with our protection, our 'defence', recognised the threat of pandemic then proceeded to marginalise it, more or less handing it over to austerity hit and/or privatised health systems and the underfunded WHO. National Security / Human Safety policies need to be drawn from a much wider remit if they are to truly rise to the challenge of combating the greatest threats to our collective human safety - climate change and pandemic. Covid-19 has exposed that while authorities recognise both pandemic and climate change as major national security threats on paper, this is not reflected in the reality of resources and efforts applied by governments to address these threats.

5. Should there be conditions (or exclusions) applied to government support for particular industries, and if so, what should they be?

DEFENCE COMPANIES

The largest defence companies in the world, including BAE Systems and Airbus Group amongst others, all have subsidiaries in tax havens to avoid paying taxes.⁵ In the UK, defence is the 4th largest area of government expenditure.⁶

Tax Justice Network has proposed that “national tax systems should be adjusted to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic: a large fiscal stimulus, with spending running far ahead of tax revenues — but no blank cheque. The poor and vulnerable should pay less and receive more, while rich people and strong, highly profitable corporations should pay more — a lot more.”

Following the lead of Tax Justice Network we believe the following measures should be adopted and adapted to ensure UK defence companies pay their fair share of tax:

- **A HARD crackdown on tax havens** and more resources for tax authorities.

It is often hard to see where the loyalty of multinational defence companies lies. Defence companies should be banned from creating subsidiaries in tax havens. Governments should review and stop unnecessary, or even corrupt, subsidies and tax credits to defence companies.

- **Implement huge – maybe 50-75 percent annual — “excess profit taxes”**, targeting only highly profitable firms, and sparing fragile firms. The tax haven crackdown will help stem leaks.

If defence companies sold their products and services with appropriate prices in a transparent and accountable way (to citizen and politicians alike) it is difficult to see how they can make ‘excessive’ profits⁷. It is therefore fitting to tax them heavily.

- **Tax wealth.** Hefty wealth taxes, land value taxes, capital gains taxes, and more, with only modest reliefs where appropriate and truly needed.

Executives in defence companies are some of the richest people.⁸ Their salaries and bonuses are people’s taxes - they are meant to enrich our collective security not their personal financial security.

- Put unemployed people back to work in a climate-friendly **Green New Deal**.

Let’s not omit the military-industrial complex’s role in climate breakdown. This is why we need **Green New Deal Plus**.⁹

PART TWO Reset - Questions 11 & 12

11. What should be the key global priorities of the UK and what measures should the UK take to support a globally co-ordinated reset?

GLOBAL PRIORITIES for the UK

1. ECONOMY: Universal Public Services & Tax Justice

There is no better nation than the UK to lead by example in advocating (i) universal public health, especially in the global south (ii) tax justice - UK civil society for two decades has led the way on pushing for Tax Justice. The UK government should support any and all measures to capture the lost tax trillions to the public purse – especially tax held in UK offshore territories; (iii)¹⁰ joining with other nations in deepening efforts to introduce complementary Universal Public Services (UPS) and Universal Basic Income (UBI).

To add to these, while difficult - because debates about national security and defence always are - the UK could, should, have the courage to look at our climate changed, post-Covid19 world and ask: is our national and global framing (and allocation of resources) concerning defence and security truly fit for purpose?

Can we really say we have learned lessons from Covid-19 if we exempt debate about our current definitions of 'defence' and 'security' and by extension, how we see ourselves in the world?

2. DEFENCE AND SECURITY: Grasp the moment to lead a global debate on how we can, collectively, place 'human safety' front and centre in our defence, security and foreign policies

The global human family has been locked down and in fear of its life not because anyone declared war, not because of nuclear threats, not because of 'the other' – but because of a virus.

The global military budget is nearing \$2trillion annually. The UK has one of the world's largest defence budgets, with nearly 40% of budget spent on equipment alone.¹¹ While every aspect of human endeavour – energy, mining, construction, transport, agriculture, manufacturing, commercial businesses and residential housing – is being asked to cut emissions, the global military has been exempted from reporting emissions.¹² It's estimated that the carbon footprint of British military is 11 million tonnes of CO₂e,¹³. Globally, militaries and defence industries account for *at least 1%* of the total global greenhouse gas emissions, but the figure could be as high as 5%.¹⁴ For comparison, civil aviation accounts for approximately 2.1 % of global GHG emissions.¹⁵ While the UK's MOD is making 'back room' carbon cuts ie administrative, it is, like all militaries, completely dependent on fossil fuels. Through the pandemic, the UK military's role was to help support the delivery of 1bn pieces of PPE.¹⁶

TIME magazine interviewed Former President of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev about the pandemic:¹⁷

"What we urgently need now is a rethinking of the entire concept of security. Even after the end of the Cold War, it has been envisioned mostly in military terms. Over the past few years, all we've been hearing is talk about weapons, missiles and airstrikes... The overriding goal must be human security: providing food, water and a clean environment and caring for people's health. To achieve it, we need to develop strategies, make preparations, plan and create reserves. But all efforts will fail if governments continue to waste money by fueling the arms race... I'll never tire of repeating: we need to demilitarize world affairs, international politics and political thinking."

At the moment, two of the most socially and economically damaging threats to our collective global security/safety – climate change and pandemic – are not centre place in defence/security policy-making but are primarily relegated to a supportive, humanitarian military response.¹⁸

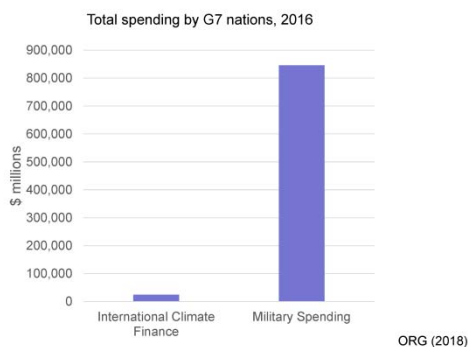
Shouldn't climate change and pandemic be *central* to how 'defence' is redefined by all nations? If not now, when? When *will* be the time to redefine, redesign, repurpose the 'terms of reference' for our foreign and defence policy-making?

Local, national, global inter-connected human safety must, of course, be prepared to deal with for 'traditional' threats ie cross-border aggression as well as 'modern' threats such as cyber warfare. But the time has come for citizens and leaders alike to recognise that these threats must be proportionate in both time and resourcing and should take their *appropriate* place alongside threats of **equal or greater importance** eg accidental or planned nuclear attack, pandemic, climate change, poverty/environmental/extractive driven conflict. Global health, peace/disarmament and climate change are, in fact, **hard** defence & security issues.

Climate change and COVID 19 are both screaming at us that it's high time we got beyond national self-interest.



Military v climate spending



Military v climate spending

	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)

(Slides from a presentation by Dr Stuart Parkinson of Scientists for Global Responsibility)¹⁹

On the pandemic, George Monbiot wrote:²⁰

“We are defending ourselves against the wrong threats. For decades, UK governments have been fighting not just the last war but a redundant notion of war, spending hundreds of billions against imaginary hazards. At the same time, as we have become horribly aware over the past few weeks, they have neglected real and urgent dangers. ...

That £41.5bn spent on the military is more than twice as much money as the UK spends on preventing climate and ecological breakdown – which are not just potential threats but current emergencies. It is hundreds of times more, as we are now discovering, than the government has spent on preparing for pandemics.[emphasis added]”

If we do not put 'human safety' front and centre in defence and security policy-making, we will be not only unable to handle another global pandemic but also unable to deal with the consequences of the climate breakdown. The reality is that despite the unprecedented impact on society and economy by the Covid-19 virus, it will be small in comparison after we fail to prevent full-on climate breakdown.

MEASURES to assist a globally co-ordinated reset

Bernie Sanders in his Green New Deal offer during the presidential race included this courageous, paradigm-shifting pledge,²¹

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. Bernie recognizes that the Pentagon is the largest institutional emitter of greenhouse gases in the world and that the United States spends \$81 billion annually to protect oil supplies and transport routes. We are uniquely positioned to lead the planet in a wholesale shift away from militarism.

1. **We should express support in whatever fora possible** for those brave political voices inside the USA (Barbara Lee, Bernie Sanders, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez) who are trying to turn the USA military tanker around, *since the UK – like every other nation on earth – takes its lead from the world’s biggest military spender, the USA.*
2. **We should take up Bernie Sanders call and host a UK/USA led gathering on how to re-structure defence planning and spending, in a pandemic, climate changed time, taking Barbara Lee’s work as a starting point**, who proposed a plan to cut the Pentagon annual budget by up to \$350bn.²² *Funds redirected to climate change mitigation, pandemic prevention and reversing inequality are routes to delivering human safety at a personal, local, national and global level.*
3. **We should address the role of the military in climate change in all GND plans** (see GND Plus, TPNS)²³ and tackle the difficult and challenging reality of the military-oil industry relationship and climate change. *The break-up of the military-oil industry relationship and complete decarbonising of the world’s militaries must be a part of this debate.*
4. **We should request the UK military to ‘publish what it burns’** and set an example to others in the top 20 military spenders and emitters. Until now, we have collectively and consistently ignored the massive yet unaccounted for responsibility of the world’s militaries to climate change, from their *day-to-day operational activities to the wars and conflicts of which they are part.*
5. **We should call for new funds to be redirected/allocated to a Global Pandemic Surveillance and Control Organisation** under the auspices of the WHO. WHO estimated the cost of planning for a pandemic was around \$1 per person per year.²⁴ That is \$8bn a year.

Simply diverting 1% of the annual global military expenditure (\$1.9 trillion) will make available \$19bn a year to fund both WHO and this new global pandemic prevention initiative. 1% of the British MOD budget is £400m.²⁵

6. **Significantly increase the WHO budget: Value for Money** The WHO has an annual budget of \$2bn - a profoundly inadequate sum given its (necessarily) huge remit. But this figure is doubly inadequate when taking into account the social and economic consequences of the potential for a mishandled global health crisis.

At current WHO levels, its annual \$2 billion is only 0.1% of annual \$1.9 trillion we spend globally on militaries. Redirecting just 1% of global military spending in one single year can fund the WHO for 10 years. It's hard to argue with this '*value for money*' case.

- 7. Better funding of global Disaster Risk Reduction efforts.** Global Disaster Risk Reduction (DDR) efforts are grossly underfunded. The international community spent on average around \$500m annually on DDR via UNDRR.²⁶ This is 0.05% of the annual global military spending. 1% of the British MOD budget alone is enough to fund at its current level entirely.

We are in the midst of climate breakdown. We have to better fund global DDR efforts together.

12. What opportunities are presented by the UK co-hosting COP26 in 2021 and/or the G7 presidency and how should these be used?

With civil society support built up in advance, there is a great opportunity to make the COP26 one where, for the first time, serious debate about the role and responsibility of the global military in climate change is in the frame; leading to new ideas and frameworks for how we shape a '*carbon neutral defence*'²⁷ which has our collective human safety centre-stage in the development of new foreign and defence thinking and spending.²⁸

COP 26 OPPORTUNITY FOR ACTION

(Items 2 & 3 are lead recommendations in a report to be published by TPNS / CA Ireland)

- 1. A UK/USA led panel on how to re-structure defence planning and spending, in a pandemic, climate changed time,** with Sanders, Lee and AOC from USA.
- 2. Call for an IPCC Special Report** on the role of the global military in climate emergency
- 3. Create a new UNFCCC Topic: Carbon Neutral Peace and Defence** in the UNFCCC Topics Categories
- 4. Call for every nation to 'Publish What You Burn'** and require their military to deliver *compulsory* full GHG emission reporting in keeping with all national carbon-reduction targets. To include conflicts/wars and emissions figures for those nations with overseas bases
- 5. Support the Climate Fair Share model.**²⁹

HC/DB July 2020

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- ¹ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/olympic-britain/crime-and-defence/the-fallen/>
- ² <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-05-20/debates/AC290C61-34C0-4330-A077-7FCD23EB8DFB/Engagements>
- ³ <https://www.forces.net/news/general-sir-nick-carter-avoids-party-politics-issues-challenge-future-governments>
- ⁴ <https://www.army-technology.com/news/uk-chief-of-defence-staff-participates-in-daily-coronavirus-briefing/>
- ⁵ <https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/issue-brief-arms-trade-web.pdf>
- ⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-departmental-resources-2019/finance-and-economics-annual-statistical-bulletin-departmental-resources-2019>
- ⁷ <http://www.theshadowworldbook.com/>
- ⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/05/25/business/ceo-pay-2017.html>
- ⁹ <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/green-new-deal-plus/>
- ¹⁰ <http://www.primeeconomics.org/articles/universal-basic-income-and-universal-basic-services-a-synthesis-for-the-looming-election>
- ¹¹ <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8175/>
- ¹² <http://www.ipb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/IPB-Information-Paper-the-carbon-boot-print-1.pdf>
- ¹³ https://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-05/SGR-DUK_UK_Military_Env_Impacts.pdf
- ¹⁴ https://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-07/SGR_Military-carbon-bootprint_London19.pdf; and see GND Plus, TPNS
- ¹⁵ [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603925/EPRS_BRI\(2017\)603925_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2017/603925/EPRS_BRI(2017)603925_EN.pdf)
- ¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-support-force-the-mods-contribution-to-the-coronavirus-response>
- ¹⁷ <https://time.com/5820669/mikhail-gorbachev-coronavirus-human-security/>
- ¹⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/646821/20151203-FOE_35_final_v29_web.pdf
- ¹⁹ https://www.sgr.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-07/SGR_Military-carbon-bootprint_London19.pdf
- ²⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/08/national-defence-corona-pandemic-fighter-jets>
- ²¹ <https://berniesanders.com/issues/green-new-deal/>
- ²² <https://lee.house.gov/news/press-releases/after-years-of-wasted-spending-congresswoman-lee-calls-to-cut-pentagon-budget-reprioritize-programs-that-keep-us-safe>
- ²³ <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/green-new-deal-plus/>
- ²⁴ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/panic-and-neglect-investing-health-security-financing-pandemic-preparedness-national>
- ²⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/869612/20200227_CH_UK_Defence_in_Numbers_2019.pdf
- ²⁶ <https://medium.com/@UNDPasiapac/the-future-of-disaster-risk-reduction-is-in-better-financing-1605454bf1bd>
- ²⁷ *Carbon Neutral Defence*, to be published soon, the Five Percent Campaign & Green New Deal Plus
- ²⁸ <https://thefivepercentcampaign.org/green-new-deal-plus/>
- ²⁹ <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/about-us/uk-climate-fair-share-technical-backgrounder>