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**Resisting Green Militarism:
Building Movements for Peace
and Eco-Social Justice**

**Revitalising Debate on
The Global Arms Trade**

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Executive Summary

The myth that war can be made environmentally sustainable is taking hold around the globe. This has dire consequences for the realisation of just transitions based on non-military forms of solidarity with, and care for, people and the planet.

Between 2020 and 2023, the US, UK, NATO and the EU have published a wide range of military climate adaptation plans and military-industrial sustainability strategies. The agendas respond to narratives around climate change and environmental degradation as “threat-multipliers”, against which the “objective” interests of the nation-state, military and market must be secured. Along the logic of *less fuel, more fight* – or, decarbonising defence to reduce emissions but *not* missions – these military sectors are presenting military action as compatible with climate action. They aim to center the arms industry as a guarantor of democracy and sustainable development.

This occasional paper maps the ongoing militarisation of ecological crises – captured by the umbrella concept of “green militarism” – and its implications for eco-social justice. The paper calls for policymakers, researchers, organisers and members of the public to critically engage with and resist green war and sustainable arms policies. It defines a set of key questions that these actors should pose, including:



- a) **Who or what is secured and made insecure by climate security policy?**
- b) **What kind of sustainability can militaries and arms industries provide?**
- c) **How do green war strategies mask the human and ecological costs of militarisation?**
- d) **What does the promotion of environmentally sustainable war mean for eco-social justice?**
- e) **How is a joint resistance built against eco-social injustices and green war policies?**

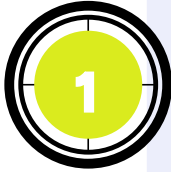
Engaging with these questions, the paper finds that the emergence of green militarism across Europe and North America is particularly harmful to eco-social justice movements that view disarmament, demilitarisation and decriminalisation as integral to tackling global ecological emergencies. Military solutions to ecological crises remain surface-level, responding to symptoms and creating new ones, rather than addressing the underlying sources that drive ecological breakdown and social strife. By contrast, peace, anti-militarist and anti-policing, social and ecological justice movements together address the root causes behind organised violence, social inequity and ecological harm.

Movements must come together to critically interrogate the notion of green(able) war to counter military actors’ repositioning as “drivers of climate action” and first-responders in a “war on climate change.” Key avenues of critique and action include revealing the ecological costs of war and military practice, exposing their humanitarian consequences, and uplifting the voices of directly impacted communities. It is imperative to demystify the narratives promoting militarisation as a solution to climate change and its impacts.



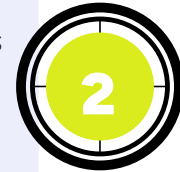
Today's polycrisis demands that we foster cooperation across social causes, methodologies and locales. Ecologies of harm require ecologies of resistance.

Key Insights for Organising



Military sectors argue that war can be made environmentally sustainable. They propose climate-security policies and green military technologies, arguing that a strong military industry is a guarantor of sustainable development. This green militarism is misleading and dangerous as it silences, marginalises and diverts resources from non-military responses to ecological challenges, and increases the criminalisation of eco-social resistance.

It is imperative to build movements that resist green militarism through fostering thought and action dedicated to *demilitarisation*, *decriminalisation*, *decarbonisation* and *decolonisation*. Stronger links between researchers, organisers and communities can be forged through creating campaigns and advancing research that recognise the inseparability of these "Ds" as solutions to the linked harms caused by militarism, criminalisation, extractivism and colonialism.



Resisting green militarism requires multiple methodologies addressing the militarisation of ecological crises from a variety of angles and approaches. Policy analysis, public education and awareness-raising communications work are all valuable avenues of campaigning and critique. Yet it is crucial that this work is integrated with broader movement-building efforts that bridge the divide between elite-driven advocacy and direct or grassroots organising.

Movements must learn from each other. Increased knowledge exchanges can grow public engagement and collective action against policymaking that militarises ecological crises at the expense of eco-social justice. Key to these exchanges are critical engagements with the concepts of militarism, security and nature (climate/environment).



Policy Asks

It is difficult to imagine a scenario in which policymakers listen seriously to the demands of organisers and communities faced with ecological collapse and armed conflict. While there is an abundance of policy recommendations, the lack of political will remains. It is essential to keep formulating these demands nonetheless. The following are suggestions for policy asks that address green militarism.

- 1) **Close the military emissions gap.** Demand transparent reporting on military emissions and advocate for the inclusion of military emissions in international carbon reduction agreements.

- 2) **Restructure and reduce military bases, deployments and doctrines** to adequately address the military's impact on climate change and environmental degradation.

- 3) **Redirect resources away from defence toward diplomacy and development** to address national security concerns. This will require reinterpreting diplomacy and development mechanisms in ways that support eco-social justice, and that alternative security frameworks (common, human, collective, ecological, sustainable) are recognised as trumping conventional security frameworks (national, state, energy, military, market).

- 4) **Strengthen national and multilateral commitments** to arms control, disarmament and ecological action and justice. Commit to creating new international norms and legal standards.

- 5) **Reject the myths of resource scarcity/competition and climate conflict.** Adopt policies that promote resource sharing and redistribution, positive peace and conflict prevention.

- 6) **Centre just transition demands and vulnerable communities bearing the brunt of global war and global warming as foreign policy priorities.** These include marginalised groups made vulnerable by disadvantages such as related to class, race, gender, ability and geographical location.

Campaign Prompts

Prompts for building movements resisting green militarism:

- **Abolish ecocide, decriminalise systems change.**
- **Combat is not the answer to climate change.**
- **War is not greenable.**
- **Green war is still war is still warming.**
- **Biodegradable bombs still kill.**
- **Don't decarbonise defence, dismantle green militarism**
- **Destroying the world ≠ protecting it.**
- **Demilitarise for eco-social justice.**
- **People and planet over power and profit.**
- **No to the green military transition, we demand just transitions.**

DEMILITARISE

DECOLONISE

DECARBONISE

DECRIMINALISE