

Committee: Disarmament and International Security Committee

Issue: Reduction of military budgets

Student Officer: Marevi Kanellopoulou

Position: Co-Chair

PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates,

My name is Marevi Kanellopoulou, I am 16 years old and a student of the GCE department at Ekpedeftiki Anagennisi. It is my utmost honor to serve as Co-Chair of the Disarmament and International Security Committee of the 3rd ACGMUN conference. MUN is an activity which I truly enjoy doing for the past 2 years and having participated in many conferences as a delegate, I decided it was high time I became a Student Officer. My goal is to convey my passion and enthusiasm to all the delegates of the committee and manage to pass well-structured resolutions. As this will be my first time chairing, I am truly looking forward to sharing this exciting experience with all of you.

The present study guide will provide you with important information, key factors and identified problems on the issue of reduction of military budgets, which troubles the international community, since most of the GDP of each country is being spent on armed force, instead of using this budget on education or healthcare. Apart from the information you are provided with through this study guide, it is highly advisable that you do your own further research, especially on your country's policy, so as to be well-prepared and fully informed.

Should you have any further questions, I am more than happy to help you. You can contact me via my email (kmarevi@gmail.com). Looking forward to seeing you all in April.

Thank you,

Marevi Kanellopoulou

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

It is well-known that war is taking place in many corners of our modern world and thus, the military budgets of nations increase. There are almost 20 major wars occurring in our era, demanding military expenditure for both attack forces and defense. As the committee responsible for international affairs of security and peace, we have to deal with the issue of military budgets. Our world is over-armed, while peace is underfunded. In the decade following Sept. 11, 2001, military spending increased by 50 percent, adjusted for inflation. In comparison to that, funding to every other non-military program – like education, health care, public transit, and science – grew by only 13.5% over the same time period. Therefore, the increase of military budgets promotes war and outnumbers the budgets raised for projects of social benefit.

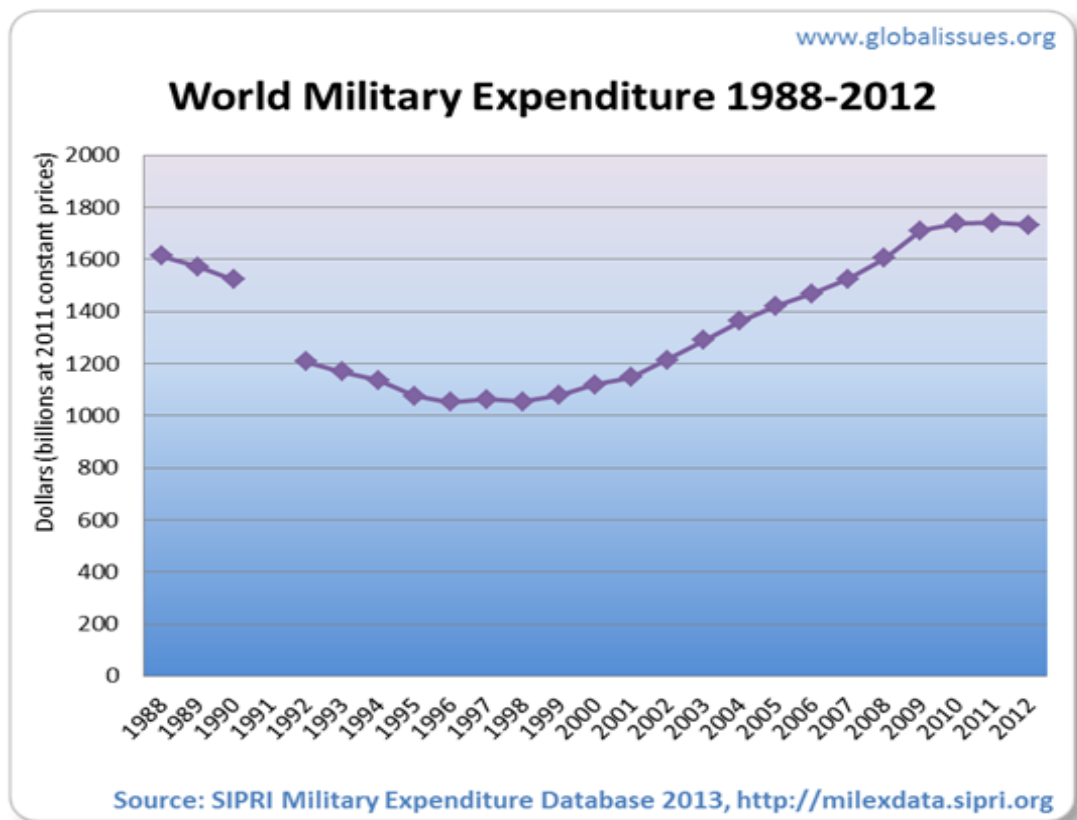


Figure 1: World Military Expenditure during the time period 1988-2012

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Defense spending

Money spent by a government to provide its military with weapons, equipment, and soldiers for defense and protection purposes.

Military budget

A military budget, also known as a defense budget, is the amount of financial resources dedicated by a state to raising and maintaining armed forces or other methods essential for defense purposes. Military budgets do not only consist of arms trade. They also include costs for personnel, sites, pensions and the hiring of private companies, but arms are a substantial part.

UNODA

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs is responsible for the *United Nations Report on Military Expenditures*, at which countries can report their military spending.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The MDGs are 8 goals with measurable targets and clear deadlines for improving the lives of the world's poorest people. To meet these goals and eradicate poverty, leaders of 189 countries signed the historic millennium declaration at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000. The new report of 2015 strives to reflect these lessons, build on our successes and to put all countries together on track towards a more prosperous, sustainable and equitable world.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Historic overview of military budgets

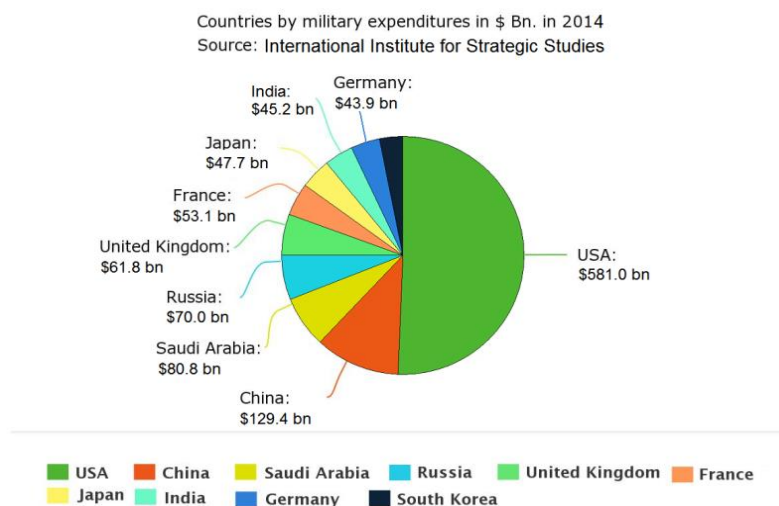
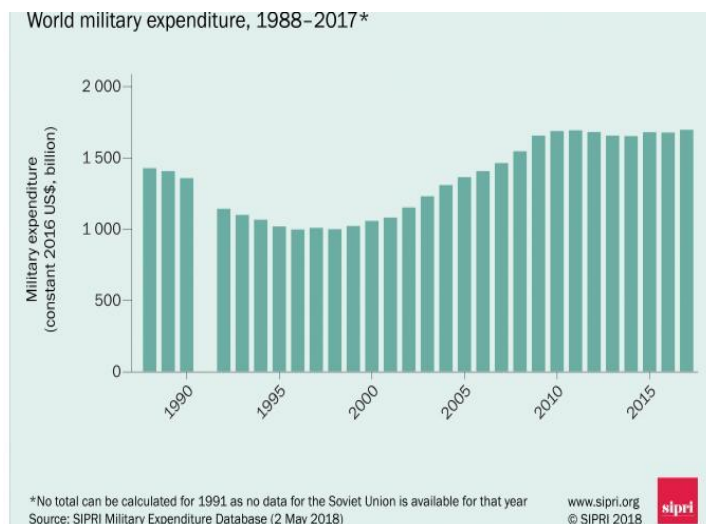


Figure 2: Countries by military expenditures in \$bn. in 2014

The United Nations have a mechanism, which counts how many dollars are being spent daily on the military. They say that “If we used all these money on

poverty, all of our problems would be solved”. However, most countries have decided to spend their GDP on military budgets and that is the reason why they must be reduced. Since its founding in 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has gathered its members in order to reinforce the coalition and address crucial issues. The next gathering of heads of state and government takes place in Brussels from 11-12 July. The summit comes amid tensions over whether member countries are meeting domestic military spending targets. At the 2014 summit in Wales, NATO members made a “Defense Investment Pledge” to move towards spending 2% of GDP on defense within a decade (for those member states not already doing so).

Figure 3: World military expenditure 1988-2017



Moreover, the global military expenditure in 2009 was estimated at \$1531 billion; a budget 6% higher than the one in 2008. Additionally, since 2000 military expenditure has increased by 49%. In 2017, the worldwide military expenditure reached \$1739 billion. This is a huge increase of 1.1% from 2016, according to the Stockholm

International Peace Research Institute. (SIPRI). For example, China’s military budget increased once again in 2017 and continued the upward direction of expenditure, since 1987. On the other hand, Russia has decreased its expenditures for the first year since 1998.

The main events which explain this rise are firstly the Afghanistan war that allegedly cost \$1.07 trillion. The money spent during this war was used on the creation of new weaponry, but also on military personnel, pensions and the cost of hiring private companies. The conflict in Yemen also changed the statistics, since Saudi Arabia became the 3rd largest military spender in 2015. Furthermore, another important factor is the value of scarce resources. Countries exporting raw material such as oil, copper etc. feel the necessity of increasing their military spending in order to be protected. Neighboring countries also tend to increase their military spending in response to the abovementioned countries’ policy.

Reasons for and Types of War

Generally, though, the reason for the existence of military budget is associated with war. Therefore, it is essential to focus on the reasons for war. There are 7 main **reasons** wars and armed conflicts constitute a big part of our past and present history.

1. **Economic Gain** is the desire of a state to control another state's wealth. Whatever the possible reasons could be, the economic motive is always underlying a decision to declare war. In modern times, the resources are being claimed by war, creating the biggest armed conflicts. Examples of economic wars are the Anglo-Indian Wars (1766-1849) and the Finnish-Soviet War or "The Winter War" (1939-1940). The arms trade also takes place for economic gain, as there is a huge profit from it since it provides employment, it strengthens relations between countries and creates economies of scale.
2. **Territorial Gain** is something that many states desire. A state could decide that there is more need for land for density purposes or agricultural use. The buffer zones are also related to proxy wars that were common during the Cold War. Two characteristic examples are the Arab-Israeli War or "Six Day War" (1967-1988) and the Ukrainian War.
3. **Religious conflicts** allude to nationalism or revenge for the perceived historical slight in the past. Ethnic and religious differences create hate and lead to violent actions. The main example of religious conflicts is the Yugoslav Wars (1991-1995) which took place between the orthodox Catholics and Muslims.
4. **Nationalism** defines wars as the will of a country to prove that it is superior to another by violence, in the form of invasion, and has many examples in our era. A major example is World War I, in which many countries became involved because of extreme loyalty and patriotism.
5. **Revenge**, the need to fight back by spirit and pride, has been the factor of many European wars. Revenge can lead to an endless chain of revenging wars. World War II and The War on Terror with the 9/11 were motivated by a revenging will.
6. **Revolutionary wars** can easily also turn to civil wars and create the biggest damage in a nation. This kind of wars occurs when the civilians are dissatisfied with their leadership and decide to make a revolution. An example is the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804).
7. Last, but not least, **defensive wars** are related to the increase of military budgets. When military aggression has risen, countries claim that they are fighting in a defensive way against an aggressor. A defensive war was the Cold War (1947-1991).

However, the most asked question nowadays is “*Why do wars still take place in a century, which is characterized by peace and development?*” The 20th century was the bloodiest of them all, as the total number of deaths reached 187 million, meaning almost 10% of our population in 1913. The wars that characterize the 21st century are the Second Congo War (1998-2003), the Syrian Civil War, the Darfur Conflict, the War in Iraq, the Afghanistan War, the War against Boko Haram, the Yemeni Civil War and the Ukraine Conflict. Interestingly, these wars occurred because nations chose to solve their problems through violence and armed conflicts.

The consequences of the increase of military budgets

It is easy to outline and understand how the rise of military budgets affect our lives, by examining the study made by a coalition of NGOs (non-governmental organisations), which compared the millennium goals with global military expenditure in order to address how the constant rise of military budgets boycotts the achievement of goals, which fight poverty and suffering (*table below*).

GOALS	BUDGETS
<i>Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</i>	Estimated Cost and an additional \$39-\$54 billion per year which is 2.5%-3.5% of the annual global military expenditures
<i>Achieve universal primary education</i>	Estimated Cost of goals 2&3 combined and an additional \$10 - \$30 billion per year
<i>Promote gender equality and empower women</i>	0.6% - 2.0% of annual global military expenditures
<i>Reduce by 2/3rds the under-five mortality rate</i>	Estimated cost of goals 4,5 and 6 combined
<i>Improve maternal health</i>	An additional \$20-\$25 billion per year
<i>Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases</i>	1.3%-1.6% of annual global military expenditures
<i>Ensure environmental sustainability</i>	Estimated cost and additional \$5-\$21 billion per year which is 0.3%-1.4% of annual global military expenditures

Table 1: Comparison of expenditures between MDGs and military

Why is it important to decrease military budgets?

Following Table 1, it is clear that huge military budgets affect the development of the rest of society. To begin with, education is affected by military expenditures. Countries decide to spend more of their money on their military, while education and health are underfunded. It is more than important to decrease military budgets and focus on the actual development of the society, through proper and universal education. For example, if we remove all the money spent on military and allocate it to achieve MDGs 4,5 and 6, we could still have a defense budget, but also take a step closer to achieving the Millennium Goals.

Despite that, many claim that military budgets are necessary to fight terrorism, while it is a fact that the United States, for example, can effectively counter terrorism while cutting their military spending. The war on terror should involve armed forces mainly for special operations forces in missions against specific targets. For example, in order to fight the Al-Qaeda terrorist network, unprecedented international intelligence and law enforcement cooperation will be necessary. Major cuts in the defense budget would be possible if the USA reduced the number of military troops abroad and adopted a more peaceful strategy. This means that military intervention will only be necessary when vital interests are threatened. The United States has no major military rivals, it is secure from any military attack and it also has a strong nuclear force. Therefore, if USA followed the aforementioned strategy, then the military budgets would decrease and the hostile relationships between the so-called rival countries would ameliorate. The example of USA depicts that all reasons presented for the abnormally high military budgets serve interests and not actual problems.

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

United States of America

National defense spending, referred to here as the military budget, is more than 30% higher in real terms than in 2000. US military spending is more than double of what Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea collectively spend on their militaries. Actually, that amount excludes \$255 billion in security-related and foreign affairs spending in the Departments of Homeland Security, State, and Veterans Affairs. The White House argues that the caps, in place through 2021 are austere and threaten to leave the US military underfunded and unable to meet mounting dangers.

It is true that the U.S. military budget is economically sustainable. We could spend more without economic calamity. There is a huge difference between what is

wise and what is possible. The US has the capability to do all sorts of spending, at least for a long time. However, the resources remain scarce and spending could take funds from better uses.

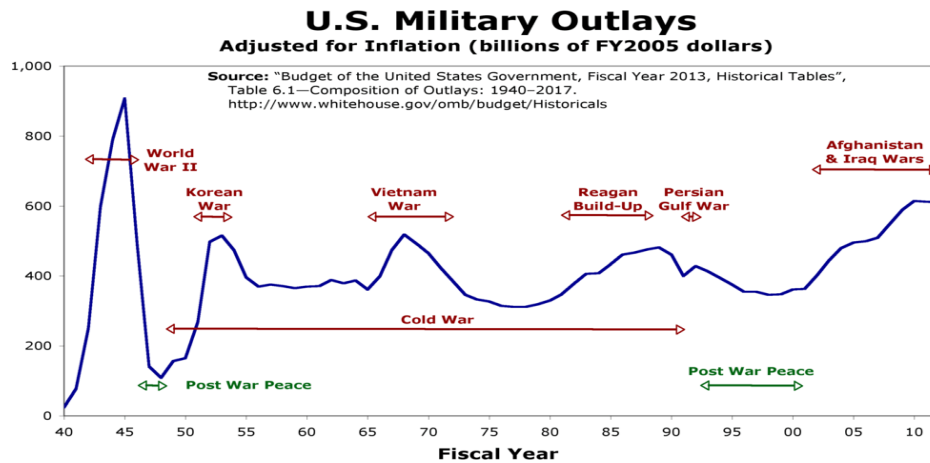


Figure 4: US military outlays

China

President Xi Jinping made it clear that his goal is to make the country a combat rival to the United States when he announced massive military spending at the end of 2018. Xi Jinping said he wants to “make China great again” when he announced a military budget of £126bn for 2019, an eight% increase. The 8.1% increase is higher than last year's announcement when it upped military spending by 7% over the previous year., meaning that the US military spending far outweighs China's. The Pentagon has requested a budget of \$686 billion in 2019, up \$80 billion from 2017.

Russian Federation

Moscow is not going to increase its defense spending like the United States and NATO since the current budget of the Russian Armed Forces is able to counter any threat; Head of the (upper house) Federation Council's Defense and Security Committee Viktor Bondarev told TASS. Russia's 2017 military expenditure was \$66.3 billion, 20% lower than in 2016. This was the first annual decrease of Russian military spending since 1998.

Saudi Arabia

According to a recent article of Pieter D. Wezeman in the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 7 of the 10 countries in the world with the highest military budget, in 2017, were in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia was the country with the highest levels of military spending and arms imports in this region. Limited transparency in military matters makes it difficult to regulate into what extent Saudi Arabia's high levels of military spending are encouraged by defensive or

offensive motives. Saudi Arabia is actually using weapons on a large scale in the offensive operation in Yemen. Actually, it has been leading the coalition of states against rebel forces in Yemen. Saudi Arabia is also militarily involved in other conflicts. For example, provision of support for rebel groups in Syria, attempting to use military assistance in order to gain influence in Lebanon.

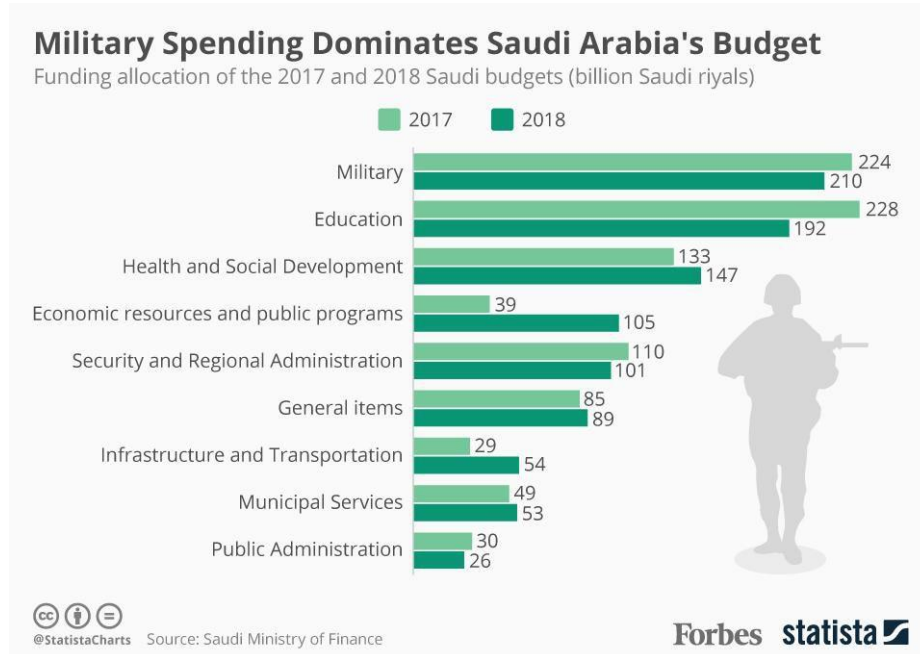


Figure 5: Saudi Arabia’s Budget

North Korea

North Korea spends more than 20% of its annual GDP on the military, despite millions of citizens suffering blackouts and a lack of adequate food. The researcher of Amnesty International East Asia Arnold Fang said that “while the size and the capability of the military are virtually impossible to identify, the commitment to nuclear weapons directly exposes the suffering of civilians in other areas of everyday life.”

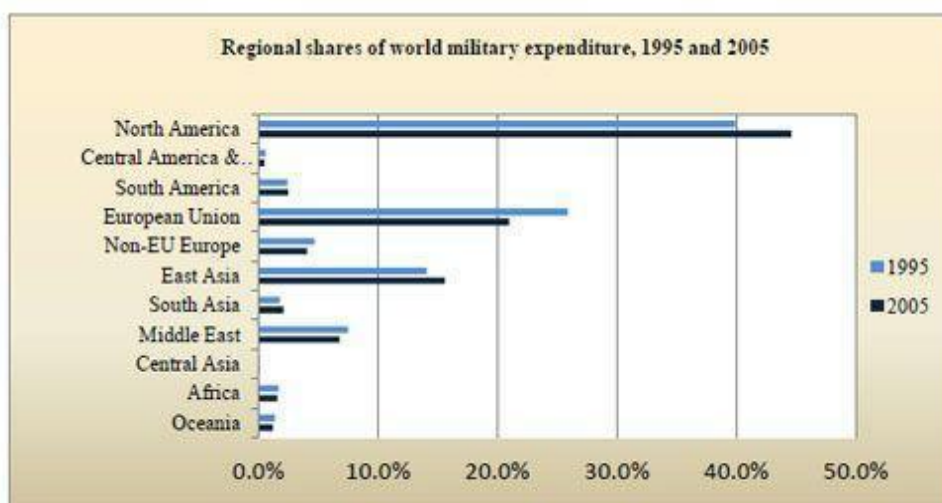


Figure 6: Regional shares of world military expenditure 1995 & 2005

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

NATO has been collecting defense expenditure data from its members on a regular basis. The USA pushes NATO to increase its military spending. The alliance has set a goal of 2% of GDP on defense by 2024. Moreover, NATO has a total defense spending of \$900 billion in 2017. This constitutes 52% of the overall global military spending. NATO has also increased its budget in the last three years since the Defense Investment Pledge in 2014 the military expenditure of NATO and Canada combined has increased by 5%.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
1949	Founding of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization(NATO) on April 4th, 1949 by 12 nations in order to promote security and freedom among its members, after World War II
2000	1st set of Millennium Development Goals by UN member states
2001-2010	Global military expenditures increase by 50%
2001-2018	Afghanistan war
2012	Establishment of the Arms Trade Treaty
2014	The ATT entered into force
	Defense Investment Pledge which asked all allies that haven't met NATO-agreed guideline of spending 2% of GDP on defense to increase spending, and aim to move towards the goal within a decade.
2015	Yemen conflict
2017	Decrease of Russia's military expenditures
	Saudi Arabia became the country with the largest military budget in the Middle East
2018	The Cut Milex Campaign
2019	China's military budget increased by \$80 billion

RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

General Assembly Resolutions

- [A/RES/72/20 – 2017](#)

This resolution wishes to make a step closer to achieving transparency of military expenditures. It focuses on the reports states are obliged to deposit. It also encourages international bodies and organizations to participate in enhancing transparency, by finding ways to create a better reporting system in cooperation with the United Nations.

- [A/RES/70/21 – 2015](#)

This resolution focuses on cooperation between states and how states should provide technical assistance to those lacking, in order to help them make their annual reports. The UN believes that this will create a climate of trust and confidence between the states, which will remove the hostile relations and eliminate the arms race.

- [A/RES/68/23 – 2013](#)

The main perspective of this resolution is to promote international and regional training seminars with the financial support of interested states, in order to explain the purpose of a standard regulating system with reports.

Reports of the Secretary-General

- [A/73/154 – 12 July 2018](#)

This report addresses the need for reports in order to track expenditures. Also, it refers to the actions of the Secretariat, such as the digital database for military expenditures. The Secretary-General received reports from 31 Governments.

- [A/72/328 – 14 August 2017](#)

In this report information about how many states are using the online database is included. In the present report, the Secretary-General received reports from 41 Governments.

- [A/71/115 – 27 June 2016](#)

An important aspect of this report is the sharing of information on military expenditures as well as the importance of increasing trust between Governments in all parts of the world. However, having this information available is only the first step in confidence-building. The Secretary-General received reports from 37

Governments.

Treaties

- [Arms Trade Treaty \(ATT\)](#)

The Arms Trade Treaty was established in 2012 to prevent international transfers of conventional arms that contribute to the violation of international human rights law and humanitarian law. The main goal was to impose regulations in order to ensure trade with transparency from small arms to battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships. This treaty was a first step to establish ethical standards and effective control mechanisms.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

Until this point, it is understood that military expenditures overshadow a nation's development in other, more important, factors. This is the reason why there have been many campaigns and treaties, in order to achieve the reduction of military budgets. For example, the Cut Milex Campaign launched by the International Peace Bureau, the UN Register of Conventional Arms and the Arms Trade Treaty.

Cut Milex Campaign

From 26 November to 26 December 2018, the Cut Milex Campaign was launched. It focused on introducing the military expenditure debate within Parliaments, during the annual discussion of national budgets. The main goal was to convey powerful messages and make politicians more vulnerable to such issues and in the meanwhile, attract the coverage of strong media. The Cut Milex asked from numerous countries the reduction of military expenditures, but it also had a local perspective in order to organize debates and shape their messages and proposals.

UN Register of Conventional Arms

International disarmaments goals are the key of the UN to limit inhumane weapons and ameliorate the confidence between states. The UN Register of Conventional Arms is an instrument, which focuses on confidence building. This can be achieved through reports with information on military imports and exports of the States, as well as the production of weaponry and weapons of mass destruction. These reports are divided into 7 different categories, so as to create a specialized image upon military expenditures. However, an attempt to include the category of small arms failed to pass, because of the resistance of the United States.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Despite the fact that there have been multiple past actions to raise international awareness and impose regulations to achieve the decrease of military budgets, from all the facts, we can see that military expenditures are increasing instead of decreasing. In order to find effective solutions, it is important to focus on both the causes of the problem and its consequences.

Primarily, attention should be given on the relations between countries, since military spending increases in order to ensure defense forces and protection. The arms race is a consequence of a motif of military spending that influences each country. The relations of countries should be defined by trust, while there should be confidence and security without the need for enormous military forces.

Another way to make a step closer to the reduction of military budgets is a common ground of regulations that it is supported by the majority of the states. Regulations that refer to arms trade, budget limits and anything that can contribute to the decrease of military budgets, should be common in order to form a movement on common grounds and achieve the reduction.

Transparency is also a key way to ameliorate the situation. Stricter reports of states on their military expenditures will create an easier regulation system, but also encourage a climate of trust and confidence between states.

Moreover, limits should be set in order to control the military budget and encourage the deposit of more money on the accomplishment of the Millennium Goals. States need to understand the importance of the Millennium Development Goals and finally allocate the budgets in the right way, to also develop education, health care, public transit etc.

We reach the conclusion that there are multiple different solutions that can encourage countries to decrease their military budget and focus on the amelioration of the society, but also ensure its defense.

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