

Rt. Hon. Miatta Fahnbulleh MP
Secretary of State, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
3-8 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2AW

Dear Miatta Fahnbulleh,

We hope this letter finds you well and we send you belated congratulations on your appointment as Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.

The international “Global Week of Action for Peace and Climate Justice” (21-27 September) raises awareness on the connection between military activity and the climate crisis. UK organisations and networks have played a leading role in bringing this issue to national and international fora.

With the UK’s position in the top ten of military spenders in the world, we feel sure you will appreciate why we write at this time to bring this issue to your attention.

We all know that war is a humanitarian catastrophe – what is less well recognised is that it is an environmental catastrophe too.

Around 5.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions result from military-related activity, and this figure does not include conflict-related emissions from sources such as war-related fires, logistics and reconstruction.[1]

Meanwhile, there is no legal obligation within the UNFCCC for nations to count and report full military-related emissions nor to include them in carbon reduction targets, such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). We must reach Net Zero and the military cannot be exempted from this.

War and military activity contribute significantly to climate change throughout their complete cycle: the manufacture of carbon-intensive equipment and weaponry; training and military operations with massive fuel use; the maintenance of vast numbers of troops, technologies and buildings; the use of fuels and explosives in warfare with resulting fires, rubble and toxic pollution; and the extensive reconstruction of devastated infrastructure with its reliance on carbon-hungry cement and steel.

Moreover, with military spending rising exponentially, military emissions will rise, not fall.[2] Military spending generally correlates with military emissions — the more we spend on fossil-fuel reliant hardware (jets, tanks, warships, missiles) the more we emit.

We know that the UK Ministry of Defence takes the climate crisis seriously and accepts that its carbon footprint must be reduced. Its plans for this, though, lie not in reducing warfare but in increasing the efficiency and sustainability of the existing system: in finding alternative fuels for war planes, low-carbon manufacturing methods in its supply chain, biodegradable explosives, even lead-free bullets.[3] Given that much of this technology is not yet technically possible nor scalable — certainly not in the brief window we have left to avert the looming climate crisis — is this anything other than ‘greenwashing’?

The UK has already fallen far below the standard set by Norway and Canada, of which the former is the only country in the world to fully monitor both core and supply-chain military emissions (Scope 1-3) and the latter is the only top military spending country to set (long-term) targets for reducing military supply-chain emissions.[4]

Furthermore, most of the military-related emission reduction achieved to date has relied on civilian action (especially decarbonisation of national electricity grids), temporary reductions in military activity, or military base closure programmes. Worse, it has looked increasingly clear that this emission reduction will be negated due to massive planned rises in military spending.[5]

The climate crisis is the greatest and most certain of the existential threats facing humanity yet attracts only a tiny fraction of the finance directed to the military. The big military spending nations of which UK is one, collectively spend 30 times more on their militaries than on climate finance for climate vulnerable nations.[6]

We know the UK MOD is pushing to meet the NATO 3.5% GDP military spending target. We urge you not to ignore the climate and humanitarian consequences of this trajectory.[7] Therefore, the Climate Change Committee should carry out an assessment of how meeting 3.5% and 5% GDP military and security spending targets will affect the scope 1/2/3 emissions of the UK military, and UK territorial and consumption emissions as a whole.

In addition, please use your influence in support of the effort to:

- Ensure the UK MOD comprehensively reports its scope 1/2/3 military-related emissions and that the British government clearly identifies military GHG emissions in its reports to the UNFCCC.
- Include a comprehensive plan in the NDC emission reduction plans and targets to reduce GHG emissions (scope 1/2/3) of the military and military technology industries.

Since climate chaos does not recognise national borders, real and long-lasting security has much more to do with human and planetary well-being and international co-operation than with military might. At this particular moment in time, as conflict and climate chaos collide, and we are breaching 1.5 degrees of warming, common sense tells us that a much more urgent effort should be devoted to negotiation, diplomacy and international law.

Kind regards,

Hilary Evans, Co-Convenor, Movement for the Abolition of War

Deborah Burton, Co-Founder, Tipping Point North South

John Cooper, Director, Fellowship of Reconciliation (England and Scotland)

Dr Keith Baker FRSA, Member of the Board of Directors, Common Weal

Colin Archer, Secretary, Global Campaign on Military Spending (UK)

Anna Peiris, Executive Director, Medact (UK affiliate for International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War)

Jane Tallents, Core Group, Trident Ploughshares

Hazel Costello, Menwith Hill Accountability Campaign

Dr Stuart Parkinson, Executive Director, Scientists for Global Responsibility

Jinsella Kennaway, Executive Director, Demilitarise Education

Rhona Michie, Director of Projects and Planning, Shadow World Investigations

Ruth Rohde, Programme Manager, Corruption Tracker

Paul Parker, Recording Clerk, Quakers in Britain

Linda Rogers, Cymru Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Ellie Kinney, Senior Climate Advocacy Officer, Conflict and Environment Observatory

Dave Webb, Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Fiona McOwan, National Secretary, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom UK

Fionna Smyth, Director Campaigns, Policy & Programmes, War on Want

Khem Rogaly, Co-Director, Transition Security Project

Sophie Bolt, General Secretary, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Campaign Against Arms Trade

Debt4Climate UK

Women in Black London (Wednesday group)

[1] Parkinson, Stuart and Linsey Cottrell. Estimating the Military's Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions. *Scientists for Global Responsibility and Conflict and Environment Observatory* (2022). <https://www.sgr.org.uk/publications/estimating-military-s-global-greenhouse-gas-emissions>

[2] Dong, W., Ran, Q., Liu, F. *et al.* Rising military spending jeopardizes climate targets. *Nature Communications* 16, 4766 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-025-59877-x>

[3] Edwards, Nico. The military green transition: Decarbonisation as warfighting opportunity. *Political Geography* (2026). <https://doi-org./10.1016/j.polgeo.2026.103573>

[4] Parkinson, Stuart. Military climate strategies: are they just greenwash? *Scientist for Global Responsibility* (2026). <https://www.sgr.org.uk/publications/military-climate-strategies-are-they-just-greenwash>

[5] Ibid

[6] Akkerman, Mark., Burton, Deborah. et al. Climate Collateral: How military spending accelerates climate breakdown. *Transnational Institute* (2022).

<https://www.tni.org/en/publication/climate-collateral>

[7] Transform Defence. NATO'S 3.5% Spending Goal: Unsustainable on every count. *Tipping Point North South*, *Transnational Institute* and *Stop Wapenhandel* (2025).

<https://transformdefence.org/publication/natos-3-5-spending-goal/>