



Independent and Peaceful Australia Network
(IPAN)

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 2 May 2018

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Global campaign on military spending calls for a 10% reduction in military expenditure in all countries.

“Global military spending has increased to \$1739 billion in 2017, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. This amount of resources being directed to rearmament is morally bankrupt,” says Annette Brownlie, Chair of the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network, which is supporting the global campaign.

“The top 10 spenders in 2017 were the USA (with an increase of \$700 billion over 2016), China, Russia, Saudi Arabia, India, France, UK, Japan, Germany and South Korea. This shows an overall constant increase over the last five consecutive years,” said Ms Brownlie.

“The Global Campaign's statement says, ‘Funds that are now spent in the military are urgently needed to reduce inequalities, to increase worldwide cooperation, to remove energy injustices, to focus on the causes that generate huge numbers of refugees and displaced people, to implement people-based global market regulations and to build a peaceful world’.

“We believe jobs should be created in sectors which make a positive contribution to our society and environment, not in exporting arms, as the Australian Government has recently announced plans to do,” Ms Brownlie said.

“In relation to Australia, our aid program is at the lowest percentage of GDP ever –

increasing aid to our neighbours and areas devastated by conflict will do more to build our security than more arms and 'defence' spending.

"We need more public housing to be built, more jobs for indigenous people, more teachers, nurses, doctors, more funding to schools, child care and universities, more investment in renewable energy and public transport, more help to refugees, not more arms. We need urgent action on climate change. We need an increase in wages for the lower paid workers.

"We need funding for urgent social needs, not an arms export industry and increased 'defence' spending," said Ms Brownlie.

IPAN supports war powers reform, as a first step to having more public discussion on the role of our military, and to avoid the situation that occurred when the Government committed troops to an illegal war in Iraq, against the wishes of the Australian people.

Actions in support of the GCOMS campaign are being held in 20 countries, including in Sydney on 2nd May at NSW Parliament House at 10.30am (Contact Denis Doherty on 0418 290 663) and in Canberra on 8th May, 12 noon at Parliament House lawns (Contact Kathryn Kelly, 0417 269 984).

[Independent and Peaceful Australia Network](#)

[Global campaign on military spending](#)

Media Interviews: Contact Annette Brownlie 0431 597 256

IPAN Media Liaison: Kathryn Kelly, contact 0417 269 984

Contact: Denis Doherty 0418 290 663 or Dr Hannah Middleton 0418 668 098 re the Sydney media conference.

IPAN is a network of over 40 member organisations around Australia – community, faith and peace groups, trade unions as well as concerned individuals – aiming to build public dialogue and pressure for change to a truly independent foreign policy for Australia – one in which our government plays a positive role in solving international conflicts peacefully.