



Independent and Peaceful Australia Network  
(IPAN)

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Don't buy into war: Turnbull Government rushing in the wrong direction with arms industry**

- **Australia should be a nation that leads the world in promoting peace not war**
- **Government expenditure on health, education or transport will provide more jobs growth than an equivalent expenditure on the Defence industry**

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) does not believe that more taxpayer dollars should be committed to the manufacture of weapons used in war, which contribute to death and destruction and human rights abuses around the world.

The new plan unveiled by the Federal Government today for a \$3.8 billion Defence Export Facility to assist arms industry companies wanting to find overseas markets requires a serious rethink.

“Australia becoming a major arms exporter is just what the world doesn't need now,” said IPAN spokesperson Stephen Darley. “What is needed is an independent voice seeking diplomatic and peaceful resolution of conflicts, not a country boosting the arms race and the profits of arms manufacturers who rely on the existence of conflicts”.

“If jobs growth is the aim, Australian tax dollars would be better invested in areas such as health, education or transport, rather than in increasing defence industry exports,” he said.

“The doubling of military exports from Australia between 2013 and 2015 and a further 50% in 2015 and now the talk of further increases, is worrying indeed,” stated Mr Darley.

“The United Nations Arms Trade Treaty came into force in December 2014, and has 130 signatories, and 89 ratifications, including Australia’s. Australia has a history of positive actions for peace internationally, but recent decades have reversed that admirable record. Australians have demonstrated on many occasions their opposition to arms trade fairs as they don’t want to go down the path of militarisation of society.”

“An assertion by the Government that exports will only be to countries where there are strict controls in place, is not borne out by current practice where Australian firms have received contracts to supply Saudi Arabia with military equipment, despite the appalling human rights record in that country and its ongoing war on Yemen.”

“It is not strong defence exports that will safeguard Australia against conflict, but strong and respectful relationships between Australia and countries in and outside our region,” he concluded.

IPAN believes our Government’s foreign policy should be focused on dialogue with and support for other countries to address the causes of war and offer resources to help create the conditions of peace - not actively promote measures which perpetuate war.

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