



Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN)

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Federal and NT Governments compromise NT health with military training exercises**

- **Vulnerable populations in Darwin exposed to COVID-19 risks**
- **Military exercises given higher priority than the health of Territorians**

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) is alarmed by the situation of two members of a foreign military group housed in an undisclosed quarantine facility in Darwin testing positive for COVID-19

IPAN shares the concerns of leading health organisations that up to 300 foreign military personnel and their families are being quarantined in a hotel in the Darwin CBD, rather than the Howard Springs quarantine facility outside Darwin.

There are significant concerns that the quarantining is happening in very close proximity to where very vulnerable homeless Aboriginal people stay.

Spokesperson for the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN), Ms Annette Brownlie stated: "The Australian Government continues to put military exercises with foreign troops at a higher priority than the health of NT residents including vulnerable indigenous communities".

"Last year the Australian Government brought a large contingent of U.S. marines into Darwin from Japan, where COVID-19 is rampant, for military exercises with the Australian Defence Force. A member of that contingent was diagnosed with COVID-19 and placed in the Royal Darwin hospital", stated Ms Brownlie.

IPAN asks why these military exercises with foreign military personnel should go ahead, especially at this time of a global pandemic.

IPAN is currently holding a People's Inquiry into the costs and consequences of involvement in US wars and the U.S. alliance. The actions in Darwin highlight a clear cost and consequence of such military alliances which put people's health at a lower priority than military exercises.

Details of this Inquiry can be found at: [www.independentpeacefulaustralia.com.au](http://www.independentpeacefulaustralia.com.au)

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