



MEDIA RELEASE

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Military contributing the Sixth Extinction phase

“As we are in the sixth global extinction phase, the Holocene or Anthropocene Extinction, we need to be reminded that war is one of the most destructive forces against the environment, as well as against humanity,’ said Annette Brownlie, Chair of the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network.

“Specifically, the US Department of Defense is the largest industrial consumer of fossil fuels in the world. *Oil Change International* estimated that the US military emitted 100 million metric tonnes of CO₂ in fuelling its war in Iraq in five years.

“Military ships, planes, tanks and other land vehicles are huge users of fossil fuels, and war itself creates enormous destruction which requires further more fossil fuels in the reconstruction of cities and infrastructure. This destruction is on top of the toll of human misery wrought by war.

“Climate change promotes or exacerbates conflict which can lead to war, as demonstrated by the social unrest arising from the drought in Syria, which led to the Syrian war.

“The \$1.8 trillion dollars that was spent globally in 2018 on military spending (SIPRI) is sorely needed to deal with climate change and poverty instead of being invested in destruction. The USA was by far the biggest spender on the military in 2018 with expenditure of \$649b, far exceeding China, the next largest with \$250b.

“It is a type of insanity to be fomenting conflict, as the US has been doing with Iran since it unilaterally pulled out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Agreement which all parties have agreed Iran was complying with.

“By contrast, as Professor Joe Camilleri OAM has said,” *‘a just peace agenda allows for an inclusive ethic which alone can overcome the great ailments of our time: greed, populism, militarism, extremism and anthropocentrism. It makes policy makers accountable, and empowers citizens and communities to make ethically informed judgments. It offers us a unique opportunity to reshape the national conversation in Australia.’*”

This is the peace agenda that IPAN will be promoting at its forthcoming national conference,

Australia at the Crossroads, Time for an Independent Foreign Policy, in Darwin, 2-4th August 2019, along with recognizing the global and local environmental impacts of military activities.

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