

# GLOBAL DAY of ACTION on MILITARY SPENDING

<http://demilitarize.org/>

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## Global Day of Action on Military Spending 12 April, 2011

Welcome to the second issue of our Global Day of Action on Military Spending newsletter. More and more groups around the world are signing up to hold actions on April 12, our global day of action. This edition concentrates on East Asia, which has been the focus of military tensions in the last several months. These tensions are propelling governments in the region – Japan, China, S. Korea – to boost military spending. (The US, another key regional player, is already the world's military giant). But peace groups in the region are also working hard to counter these trends. Read on to find out what's happening in this critical region.

### War in East Asia?

Northeast Asia has found itself newly consumed by militarism, mistrust, and uncertainty. An artillery clash between North and South Korea in November erased whatever gradual rapprochement the two countries may have achieved since the sinking last March of the South Korean ship, the Cheonan, worsening a regional climate already strained by tensions between China and Japan. Ominously, all four parties seem to be lurching toward a regional arms race.

Citing China's recent military buildup, its amplified maritime activities, and its more assertive posture in the region, the government of Japan has moved to enhance its own aerial, maritime, and ballistic missile defenses. Although the Japanese government currently insists it will maintain its traditional policy of restricting arms exports, this export ban might not last for long. Meanwhile, despite its precarious economic

### Organizers:



The **International Peace Bureau (IPB)** is dedicated to the vision of a World Without War. We are a

Nobel Peace Laureate (1910); over the years, 13 of our officers have been recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Our 320 member organisations in 70 countries, together with individual members from a global network, bring together expertise and campaigning experience in a common cause. Our current main programme centres on Sustainable Disarmament for Sustainable Development.

### Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) is a



community of public scholars and organizers linking peace, justice, and the environment in the U.S. and globally.

We work with social movements to promote true democracy and challenge concentrated wealth, corporate influence, and military power. As Washington's first progressive multi-issue think tank, the IPS has served as a policy and research resource for visionary social justice movements for over four decades.

situation, Japan has given in to U.S. pressure to pay \$2.2 billion a year for the American troops stationed there.

Given its history of militarism in the first half of the 20th century, Tokyo's new posture is likely the cause of alarm in Beijing. With each party unsettling the other and the specter of a new conflagration in Korea, military investments are increasingly likely to overshadow the countries' social priorities. If the region's governments won't step back from the brink, it falls to civil society to douse the fuse of this powder keg.

## Peace Activists Respond

On November 18, 2010, peace activists from Japan, South Korea, China, the United States, and Europe converged on Seoul for a conference, a strategy session, and lobbying in the Korean National Assembly. The purpose was to build support for reducing military spending in the region and to promote a regional nuclear-weapons-free zone.



*Peace & Disarmament Exhibition in the Korean National Assembly lobby – the sign on the right announces a civil society proposal for peace and disarmament on the Korean peninsula.*

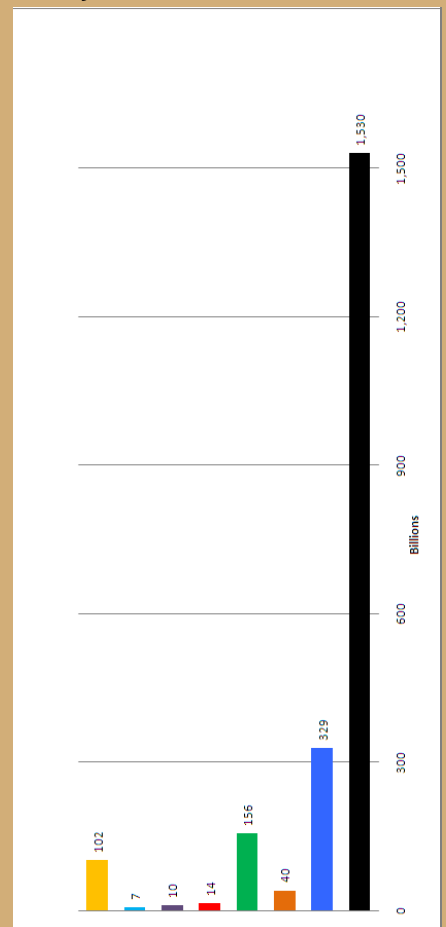
"In recent years," said Taeho Lee of People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (Korea), "South Korea's military strategy has gone from a defence-oriented one to an increasingly offensive one. Particularly after the Cheonan Incident (sinking of S Korean ship), its offensive nature has become even more acute."

"Conventional and nonconventional security threats to free navigation in international waters have driven Beijing to upgrade its capability to ensure its sea-route security," Beijing University's Hua Han pointed out.

## GDAMS Website

Our website is up and running at <http://www.demilitarize.org>.

Here you can find out where actions are being planned around the world. You can watch videos that can give you ideas of what you can do on April 12. And you can download information about global military spending and related topics such as military bases. Here, for instance, is a comparison compiled by A. Dueck of the International Peace Bureau of the estimated costs of fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals (in colors) versus what we're spending on the military (in black).



"The nuclear development of DPRK continues, the U.S.-Japan-ROK military bond becomes tighter, and China and Russia do not stop the modernization of their military forces," argued Ichiro Yuasa of Peace Depot (Japan). "This scenario offers us no other choice but never-ending military tension."

Events are being planned for Seoul, Tokyo, and Beijing for April 12. Elsewhere in Asia, organizers in Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Hawai'i have already signed up.

## GDAMS Video

In each of our newsletters, we highlight a different example of an effective visual that people can use on April 12, 2011. Here, our GDAMS staffers go to American University, in Washington, DC, to show you how global military spending stacks up against other urgent global priorities. In the photo below, you can see different colored flags representing poverty eradication, provision of clean water, and so on. The line of black flags represents military spending! Watch the full video [here](#).



<http://demilitarize.org/videos/video-figure-cost-save-world>

## Don't Forget

- Let us know if you're planning an event for April 12 ([gdams2011@gmail.com](mailto:gdams2011@gmail.com)) – share your ideas with others around the world!
- Sign up on our [Facebook](#) page
- Follow us on [Twitter](#)