

# GLOBAL DAY of ACTION

## on MILITARY SPENDING

<http://demilitarize.org/>

September 2011

### Global Update

In the months since our first Global Day of Action on Military Spending on April 12, important political changes in the United States and Western Europe have come into clearer focus. Budgetary constraints, coupled with increasing popular pressure, have built a consensus in the United States around the implausibility of addressing the country's debt burden without making meaningful reductions in defense spending. But the final shape of any potential military cuts have yet to take shape, and powerful political interests continue to advocate for bloated military budgets that deny funds to sorely needed social investments. In Western Europe, meanwhile, several countries have jumped out ahead of the United States in reallocating their resources away from military expenditures, much to the chagrin of some U.S. policy makers.

Elsewhere in the world, however, notably in Latin America and Africa, military budgets have seen notable increases, and controversies around arms transfers and basing issues persist from Latin America to Saudi Arabia to Okinawa.

As we begin to prepare for our next Global Day, in April 2012, the challenge is to keep up the international civic pressure to reduce military spending in the face of strong resistance to the cuts made so far and in those parts of the world where little progress has been made at all.

In our first newsletter of the fall, we offer contributions from Foreign Policy in Focus contributors highlighting snapshots of developments in several countries with regard to military budgets, bases, and arms transfers.

### Military Spending

#### United States (by Keith Menconi)

Out of the Obama administration's \$670.6 billion Defense Department budget request for 2012, \$117.6 billion will be spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and \$553 billion will go to support the Pentagon's base budget, spending on Pentagon programs not related to the ongoing wars abroad. This requested base budget represents a 42% increase over 2001 spending levels.

This massive increase reflects several patterns that have emerged in the post-9/11 "gusher" of military expenditures: The cost of military hardware has grown; congress weighs down defense bills with unabashed pork spending; layers of redundant and often inefficient bureaucracy continue to multiply; and, perhaps most significantly, a fundamental lack of strategic prioritization has led to an increasingly expansive visions of American security interests.

### 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.

With the deficit debate raging in Washington, the Pentagon's rapidly expanding budget has come under closer scrutiny. In response, President Obama has called for a fundamental review that will inform upwards of \$400 billion in cuts over twelve years. The deficit deal reached on August 2<sup>nd</sup> does put security cuts on the table; however, because the legislation defines security for the first round of cuts as including a range of programs—like the State Department, USAID, and Homeland Security—and because the cuts in the second round will only go into effect if the bipartisan committee fails to reach an agreement, it remains uncertain whether or not defense will face any serious cuts.

### **Pakistan (by Adam Cohen)**

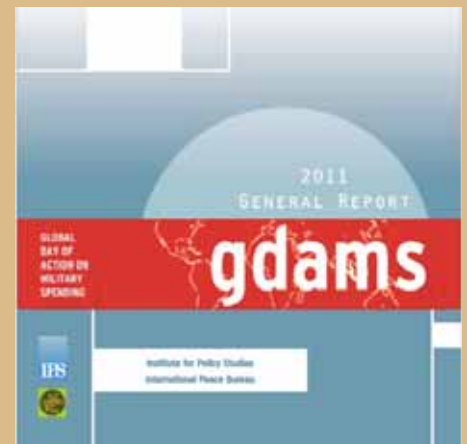
Pakistan's defense budget for the next fiscal year will be 495 billion rupees, an increase of 12 percent from the last fiscal year. This does not include security-related costs, military pensions, or the 15 percent salary increase allotted to government employees that armed forces personnel will benefit from. These expenditures balloon the budget to approximately 900 billion rupees, or twice the reported amount. Announced last month, the U.S. decision to cut military aid to Pakistan cannot be used to justify this decision that will steal funding from important domestic projects that are sure to continue suffering. Even more unprepared to weather the monsoon season fast approaching, the Pakistani people doubt their government will be there to support them any more than it was when floods decimated the country last year.

### **Denmark (by Vivian Yang)**

According to Gerard O'Dwyer of the Defense News, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) of Denmark, which is likely to lead the government after the fall elections, plans to produce a more affordable national defense structure. This structure, if adopted, would reduce the Air Force's front-line fighter fleet from 48 to about 16 planes, thus making it impossible for Denmark to send jets on international missions. The downsizing of the Danish Air Force has much to do with planned reductions in the country's defense budget and the SDP's assertion that Denmark does not need an Air Force that has 48 fighter planes. To quote SDP's defense spokesman Dyrby Paulsen, who is expected to become defense minister in the next government, "What we need to ask is: Do we, as a small nation, really need to have such a large Air Force, and can we afford to properly maintain one of this size in the future?"

### **Finland (by Vivian Yang)**

The Finnish Ministry of Defense has planned to slash defense budget by about \$300 million in the 2012-2013 budget, according to Defense News. The Finnish parliament defense committee is in favor of this spending cut. The plan, if enacted, would result in organizational changes in Finland's principal military regions and Army units, which will facilitate the nation's goal to restructure its armed forces by 2016. The trend of slashing defense budget in recent years has at least two principal causes. For one, the view that Finland's defense posture is too high for peacetime is gaining ground in the political mainstream. For the time being, Finland's defense budget is supposed to be around \$4.2 billion in 2011. For another, Finland's 8 billion euro budget deficit in 2011 puts more pressure on the country's defense budget.



Check out our General Report for a comprehensive listing of GDAMS-related activities that took place on and around April 12.

### Angola and Africa (by Simone D'Abreau)

Africa is currently holding second place for the sharpest increase in military spending for 2010. Defense spending in Africa increased 5.2 percent over 2009, and was led by major oil-producers such as Algeria, Angola and Nigeria. In actuality, this figure should be higher due to the exclusion of statistics in countries like Sudan, Libya, Mauritania, Tanzania, and Eritrea.

Leading Africa's military budget increase is Angola, whose budget increased by 19 percent in 2010. Unfortunately, a future decrease in Angola's military spending is improbable due to Angola and Portugal embarking on a technical-military cooperation program, which launches this year and concludes in 2014. This program supposedly guarantees an increase in "effective" internal stabilization and is a means to secure the superiority of a legitimate and democratic political control. On top of that, this co-operation includes health insurance for Angolan military personnel in Portugal and provides arms and training. In addition, Angola is linking up with the United States, China, Russia, Brazil, and South Africa to form strategic military partnerships.

But what about health, education, and other social services? Angola ranks as the world's 17th least developed country, with increasingly alarming rates of infant mortality, illiteracy, and preventable diseases due to lack of sanitation and clean water. The Angolan government should reallocate a portion of the military budget to improving these conditions.

### South Korea (by Ikhwan Kim)

The South Korean government is highly likely to increase its defense budget in the wake of the mysterious sinking of the *Cheonan* warship and North Korea's shelling of Yeongpyeong island last winter. According to its 2011 figures, its defense budget was set at 31.4031 trillion won (USD \$29.3 billion), an increase of 6.2% over the previous year.

The increase matches the recommendations of a recent government report, which urged the South Korean government to increase spending to offset an imminent decline in military personnel in the coming decades due to demographic changes in the country.

Meanwhile, The recent realignment of U.S. forces in Korea has also precipitated the increases in military spending. U.S. troops in South Korea have begun to consolidate bases scattered around South Korea, closing down smaller bases while expanding larger ones.

According to the Status of Forces Agreement between the U.S. and South Korea, the two countries are obliged to share the cost of the realignment of USFK. Therefore, it is likely that South Korea's defense budget will increase as the realignment plan proceeds.



## Arms Transfers and Development

### Germany (by Keith Menconi)

While German military spending has held fairly constant at between \$44 and \$49 billion for the past decade (2009 inflation adjusted dollars), the German government has been responsible for an ever-growing volume of global arms transfers and is now the third largest arms dealer in the world. German arms sales attracted domestic and international criticism when in early July the German National Security Council leaked news of a pending sale of 200 Leopard II main battle tanks to Saudi Arabia, a sale valued at roughly \$2.5 billion. The pending sale has sparked concerns that German tanks will become the instruments of repression for authoritarian governments thrown off balance by the Arab Spring.

These fears have some precedent: "The sight of Saudi tanks rolling into Bahrain signaled the start of Bahrain's crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy protesters there," said Christoph Wilcke, senior Saudi Arabia researcher at Human Rights Watch. While the German government has refused to sell these advanced tanks to Saudi Arabia since the 1980s for fear that they could be used against Israel, many analysts believe that Germany is now more concerned with strengthening regional allies against Iranian aggression. Regardless of the strategic wisdom of this policy, such a sale has significant human rights implications. Wilcke argues that "[s]elling tanks while ignoring rights abuses sends the wrong signal at a time when European leaders have pledged to take a new and supportive approach to democracy activists in the Middle East."

### Indonesia and Southeast Asia (by Rehanna Jones-Boutaleb)

Indonesia and South Korea have launched a formal partnership to develop new and improved fighter jets. According to the Defense Acquisition Program Administration (DAPA), the two countries have opened a state-of-the-art joint research center in Daejeon, south of Seoul. This development follows from a preliminary deal in April 2011, whereby Indonesia agreed to acquire 50 KF-X fighter jets from South Korea and shoulder a percentage of development and production costs for the new fighter jets.

Indonesian Defense Minister Purnomo Yusgiantoro aims to add greater military muscle to the nation's aging armed forces. Following three years of dwindling defense budgets, Yusgiantoro announced an anticipated 2011 defense budget of \$6.3 billion. According to *Jane's Information Group*, Indonesia's defense budget is expected to grow in line with real GDP growth, increasing from 0.8 percent of GDP to 1.1 percent of GDP this year. This increase can be analyzed in the context of the larger wave of defense spending and acquisitions throughout Southeast Asia. According to the *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, arms transfers to Southeast Asia have nearly doubled in recent years. Between the periods 2000-2004 and 2005-2009, Indonesian arms imports have increased by 84 percent.



## Basing Issues

### Okinawa (by Shiran Shen)

New developments in Japan threaten to frustrate the efforts of anti-base activists on the island of Okinawa. For years, the local Okinawa residents have been opposing U.S. military presence in Okinawa on charges of increased crime rates, noise pollution from military drills, augmented risk of aircraft accidents, environmental degradation, among others, but never succeeded in negotiating a deal that would put an end to these problems with the Pentagon. In June 2010, Japan's former Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama stepped down over his inability to change the status quo on the island of Okinawa.

Finally, on July 16 of this year, Japanese Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa and his newly appointed U.S. counterpart, Leon Panetta, agreed that Tokyo and Washington should "move forward with the plan to relocate the controversial Futenma base within Okinawa," according to the Japan Times.

### South Korea (by Christine Ahn, from her column, [Naval Base Tears Apart Korean Village](#))

In April, renowned South Korean film critic Yang Yoon Mo was arrested for erecting and living in a tent on the coast for years to impede construction [of a naval base in Gangjeon, on the island of Jeju in South Korea]. Yang subsequently went on hunger strike for 71 days, 57 of which were spent in prison. In May, Choi Sung-hee, an artist and peace activist living with the villagers, was arrested for demonstrating and standing in the way of cement trucks to prevent them from pouring concrete over lava rock along the coastline. In June, Gangjeong village chief Kang Dong-kyun and peace activist Song Kang-ho confronted a large Samsung construction vessel in a small tugboat. When Song attempted to board the vessel, he was beaten and thrown back into the tugboat...

The process that led to Gangjeong becoming the base site was grossly undemocratic; the community fabric is being torn apart; and the Korean War is still playing out in this struggle on Jeju Island.

### Honduras (by Tania Arroyo)

June 28 marked the second anniversary of the coup that ousted democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya in Honduras. During the conflict United States showed an inconsistent and soft position toward the upheaval, unlike the many Latin American countries that immediately condemned the political crisis. Some commentators, including [Conn Hallinan of Foreign Policy in Focus](#), have pointed to the role of congressionally funded U.S. organizations like US-AID and the National Endowment for Democracy in financing Honduran groups that supported the coup, some of whose officers were trained at the School of the Americas in the United States – the latest indication of the militarization of U.S. diplomatic programs.



Since the arrival of Honduran President Porfirio Lobo, Honduras has stepped up its cooperation with the U.S.-led drug war and in providing bases for the U.S. armed forces. With the United States developing or maintaining at least three bases in the country, Honduras is only the latest Latin American country to suffer for its strategic location.

The basing process has paralleled an opening of the U.S. military aid spigot.

## Onward!

Uneven progress toward the global goal of rolling back military expenditures, curbing arms transfers, and reaching just and equitable resolutions to basing controversies highlights the work that remains for civil society activists. Foreign Policy in Focus contributor Vivian Yang offers us this example from Hong Kong:

The [Peace International Foundation \(PIF\)](#), a Hong Kong-based NGO, is organizing the 2011 Hong Kong Peace Festival with the theme "Music and the Planet" this September. This coincided with the 30th anniversary of the International Day of Peace on September 21, 2011. The International Day of Peace was declared by the UN General Assembly in 1981 in the hope of bringing peace to the world.

The matching PIF Hong Kong Peace Festival, held the same day, featured a Day of Peace ceremony and a benefit concert. A not-for-profit organization that strives to bring about peace and free the world from violence, the PIF works with local and international organizations to promote the "culture of peace." It believes that the International Day of Peace is a "day of ceasefire, personal or political."

And our friends in Seoul send word of a [Peace and Disarmament Fair](#):

A number of organizations that vigorously participated in 2011 GDAMS (Global Day of Action on Military Spending) are again planning to hold another round of a collaborative exhibitions called the Peace and Disarmament (PD) Fair.

The Fair is to take place from Oct 1st to 3rd. In order to enhance the effect of the exhibition the committee has been continuously trying to encourage other civic groups and NGOs to participate in and by doing so they expect to form an extensive and close-knit network.

The steering committee of the exhibition takes this opportunity not only as a means of informing the general public in South Korea of the importance of peace and disarmament but also as a corresponding measure to the Seoul International Aerospace & Defense Exhibition (SIADX).

The Seoul Exhibition, which will be held right after the PD Fair, will provide a platform for business deals on military equipment, an official show of military spending and the arms race. The purpose of the Seoul Exhibition stands in complete contrast to the message of PD Fair. Therefore, the need of a peaceful action plan on the days of SIADX is also being discussed in the committee meeting.

