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NO TO MILITARIZATION AND NO TO WAR

For a Europe of détente, peace, and shared security

For months now, European political leaders have been laying the groundwork to prepare us for war. Regardless of whether the risk for a large-scale conflict is in fact real or overstated, the continent's economies are already shifting towards war-time public budgets, and the dire consequences of this are already being felt as the cost of living is becoming unaffordable for large segments of the European population.

History teaches us that progressive steps towards militarization always constitute a prelude to war, and for years they have been building a discursive framework that only serves to legitimize and justify it. In 2014, members of NATO all agreed to increase their respective defense budgets to at least 2% of their GDP. After the invasion of Ukraine and the ongoing genocide in Palestine, the political priorities of NATO and the EU have shifted towards boosting their countries' spending on acquiring new weapons, reintroducing compulsory military service, financing the military industrial complex to produce more, and creating more funding streams to develop new, more lethal and autonomous prototypes.

The EU has been stoking fears of a possible Russian invasion of Europe to garner public support for its policy of rearmament and militarization. Military expenditures by EU member states reached €289.3 billion in 2023, which represented an increase of more than 21.3 % since 2022. Adding EU community spending (€7.537 billion) and the expenditures of the United Kingdom and Norway (€77.323 billion), total military spending amounts to €374 billion, the second largest in the world, only behind the United States, and nearly four times that of Russia (€100 billion).

The European Union has been implementing a policy of military deterrence that is proving absurd: it seeks to showcase its greater power and destructive capabilities to the adversary in order to dissuade any attack, but this self-destructive policy will inevitably lead to tensions escalating, an arms race, and a bellicose spiral, with the looming threat of a nuclear war, the catastrophic consequences being the destruction of life on the planet several times over.

On June 9th, European elections will be held, and we consider it an opportunity to raise our demands to the political forces participating. This is crucial; either we choose to promote policies of peace, détente, and shared security, or we will end up in a militaristic escalation. Increasing defense spending means reducing resources to counter climate change, reduce inequalities and gender equity, improve health, harmonize salaries, or uphold the rights of all citizens.

For all these reasons, the signing organizations propose:

- To advocate for détente, moving away from NATO's threatening rhetoric and arms spirals, activating disarmament, opening the doors to dialogue and mutual trust with the aim of de-escalating conflicts through the use of diplomacy, negotiation, cooperation, and non-violence. These policies should lead to the end of armed violence in Ukraine, Palestine, and other places in the world. It is necessary to resume the commitment of the 1990s to a common and shared security without exclusions in Europe.
- To promote a foreign policy oriented towards peace, focused on human security, through instruments such as mediation, diplomacy, defense of human rights, or civil intervention in conflicts in order to build peace.
- To promote spaces for dialogue among social movements, academics, and politicians aimed at developing proposals for peace policies, civilian peace corps, civil defense, and unarmed security. Enhancing human and economic resources for the military-industrial conversion to civilian productive sectors of interest.
- To actively promote environmental peace grounded in scientific principles, with clear and secure decarbonization policies that minimize and repair the damages that will affect future generations. To promote policies that impact the improvement of people's daily lives.
- To promote a human security policy focused on people's needs, with their involvement and participation.

First signatories:

- Centre Delàs d'Estudis per la Pau
- Fundipau
- Institut NOVACT de Noviolència
- UNIPAU
- Lafede.cat - organitzacions per a la justícia global
- Coordinadora d'ONG Solidàries de les comarques gironines i l'Alt Maresme,
- Coordinadora d'ONG pel Desenvolupament, la Defensa dels Drets Humans i la Pau de Tarragona
- Campanya Aturemlesguerres.cat
- Plataforma Desmilitaritzem l'Educació de Catalunya
- Fundació Carta de la Pau dirigida a l'ONU
- Justícia i Pau
- Federació de la Xarxa de Cooperació al Desenvolupament del Sud de Catalunya
- Dones x Dones
- Alternativa Antimilitarista MOC/ADNV Canarias
- Ecologistas en Acción
- Moviment d'Objecció de Consciència MOC-València
- Asamblea Antimilitarista de Madrid
- Coordinadora de ONGD del Principado de Asturias
- Plataforma Aturem la Guerra
- Plataforma Catalunya per la pau
- WILPF (Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la Paz y la Libertad)