



**United Nations Office
for Disarmament Affairs**

**Remarks “The Security We Need: Rebalancing Military Spending for a
Sustainable and Peaceful Future,”**

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As delivered



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Dear members of the media,

This is a very important launch.

We are living through a time of profound global transformation. Geopolitical tensions are intensifying and intersecting with deep-rooted structural challenges that affect the daily lives and futures of millions. Inequality is deepening, leaving the most vulnerable even more exposed, especially in fragile settings where basic needs remain unmet. Conflicts continue to devastate communities, and in many cases, humanitarian needs are outpacing our ability to respond. Meanwhile, the climate crisis is accelerating, driving displacement and instability, and compounding emergencies.

Against this backdrop, global military spending has surged to an unprecedented level of \$2.7 trillion in 2024, with projections reaching \$6.6. trillion by 2035. At the same time, progress toward attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is faltering. Only one in five targets is on track for 2030. This shortfall reflects a deep fracture in our commitment to ‘leave no one behind’ and reveals a systemic imbalance - where militarization is prioritized over development.

At this critical juncture, the Secretary-General’s report is not just timely - it is essential. It serves as a foundational document that invites us to rethink the relationship between security, disarmament, and development.

It confronts a stark reality: rising global military expenditures are not delivering peace - and will not achieve sustainable peace. Instead, they undermine our shared vision for a just, sustainable and equitable future.

The challenge before us is not to merely reverse the trend of escalating military spending and shrinking development finance - but to recommit to multilateralism and diplomacy. We must integrate peace and development agendas and recalibrate global financial priorities. This report urges Member

States to act with foresight and resolve.

Consider this: The world's wealthiest countries spend 30 times more on their militaries than on climate finance for the world's most vulnerable nations.

And rebalancing global priorities is not optional – it is an imperative for our survival.

Military expenditure, when rooted in legitimate security concerns, can help restore order and lay the groundwork for peace, of course. But it must not crowd out resources for health, education, climate action, and gender equality. It must be weighed strategically alongside other tools for security - confidence-building measures, arms control dialogue and disarmament diplomacy.

True security is not built on armaments alone—it is built when resources prioritize people over weapons, prevention over reaction, and cooperation over arms races.

We face a choice: continuing down a path of escalating militarization that sidelines development and diplomacy or take a new path toward shared security and prosperity.

The call to action is clear: Recommit to multilateralism. Invest in diplomacy and preventive efforts to de-escalate tensions, manage conflict and restore trust.

Global and regional confidence-building measures must be prioritized to address the underlying drivers of rising military expenditure. Disarmament instruments that protect civilians must be safeguarded. Military spending should be at the heart of disarmament discussions and scrutinized through the lens of human impact. Civil society - including youth, academia and local communities – have a vital role to play.

Ultimately, arms control is about people. We need a new vision of security—human-centered and rooted in the UN Charter. A vision that safeguards people, not just borders, and prioritizes institutions, equity, and planetary sustainability.

Let this report spark a new conversation, one that challenges the status quo and inspires bold, transformative change.

Thank you very much for your attention and interest in this important report and I hand over to my good friend and colleague Haoling.