

We are One World: Call for Peace!

Extend the UN Global Ceasefire and cut *all* military spending 50%!

We Call for Peace

To the people of the US, we have an alternative: Let us unite and commit to creating the conditions that support a peaceful world.

In the US, it is *past time* to invest our nation's energies and resources to building a new model. We have the wealth and ability to address human needs and support the environment that sustains us all. We can make a difference in the US and, as the world's wealthiest nation, globally. We recognize: We are one world.

We can no longer afford to squander our resources and energies on war.

The Pandemic and Climate Collapse Introduce Us to a New Era

The pandemic has created not only a global health crisis but also a global economic crisis.

"The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war. War doesn't make any sense when we have an epidemic, but war doesn't make any sense in any circumstances."

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, calling for the Global Ceasefire on March 23, 2020

Together, these combine to create a human needs crisis. Both increased funding and the implementation of the UN's proposed Global Ceasefire are crucial to provide humanitarian aid. Medical supplies and personnel must reach vulnerable populations.

We can increase the resources and energies we devote to laying the groundwork for meeting human needs, so that we can live in peace.

The effects of climate chaos are increasingly visible. In the midst of the pandemic, we experience the climate crisis, which has become more and more evident in the US and all over the world.

We can restore our planet with thoughtful use of our resources and energies.

The People Must Lead the Way to a Peaceful World

With multiple crises, the need for a humanitarian pause in fighting must be obvious. But from long experience, we understand: It will take concerted efforts to bring heads of state and others from conflicting parties to the talks necessary to build agreement on action steps to stop the fighting.

We must make that effort, because those who pay the highest price in armed conflicts are the same ones who suffer the most from COVID-19. Beyond that, they are the ones most at risk from the effects of climate change chaos – women, children, refugees and the displaced, those with chronic and acute health conditions, the poor, and the marginalized – often lack influence with those who make the choice to wage wars. But in our country, we, the people of the US, *do* have power.

As a government by the people, the US can take a strong stand for diplomacy, instead of arms. Let the US join others to show conflicting factions that the powerful nations of the world choose a shift in values. Working to support and develop nonviolent means for resolving or addressing conflict, the US can promote both the immediate and the long-term actions necessary for such a shift.

We need transformational action...we should massively invest in renewable energy... protection of biodiversity... transformations in our agriculture... we need to be carbon-neutral in 2050 ."

Secretary-General Guterres on September 14, in setting COVID-19, the ceasefire, and climate as priorities for the 75th UN General Assembly session.

The US, along with other countries, can work to bring parties to the peace table. For peace to be lasting, we need all parties to be represented. Women must be equally present, as provided under Security Council Resolution 1325 – now *ten years* old. Imagine the positive global effects, when the US demonstrates commitment to cooperation.

The UN and other parties are already working for a pause in fighting. On July 1, the UN Security Council voted *unanimously* for the Global Ceasefire. It's time for armed forces to withdraw, in order to de-escalate tensions. At the same time, the means and places for hearing the demands and grievances of all parties – again, with women equally present – must be established. Articulation of issues is prerequisite to the negotiation of issues.

Now is the time to invest our energies and resources in the conditions that make lasting peace possible!

The People Must Make the Choice of Where We Spend Our Resources

The key to making such changes possible is **redirecting US military spending**. We call for **cutting all US military spending by 50% and directing that money to human needs**. We start with the official Department of Defense (DoD) budget, passed by Congress in the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). However, the reported US DOD budget, **about \$750 billion a year, is actually only half of the total reported US military expenditures**.

Other amounts for military expenses are counted under *other* departmental budgets, such as the Department of Energy, for many nuclear weapon-related expenditures. The total “accounted for” and “reported” US war-related funding sources for 2020 totaled **\$1.25 trillion**.

In addition there are funds *unaccounted for*. These “unsupported adjustments” are discovered, but not explained, through government audits. **On average, each year since 1998 another \$1.24 trillion is spent, but unaccounted for, by the Pentagon, equaling \$21,000,000,000 (21 trillion dollars) total since 1998.**

At a time like this, for a purpose like this, *with the power of the people mobilized*, the US can acknowledge that military solutions are *no* solutions! The US can make the necessary choices:

- To end contracts with and subsidies to companies that make weapons of war.
- To refuse to approve arms sales and transfers to other countries.
- To cut costly new weapons systems and weapons development.

We, the people, must lead the US on this new course. The shift from a war economy to a peace economy will take time and persistent vigilance. An economy founded on peace will nourish a culture and a society more consistent with humane values. Let people's lives enjoy renewed meaning by incorporating *humane values* at the base of our economy!

So We Issue this Call for Peace:

- To the United Nations Security Council: Extend the Global Ceasefire.
- To the US Congress: Cut all military spending by 50% and move the money to fund human needs.

We must embrace the opportunity for this long-sought shift. In the months ahead, through the efforts of issue committees, branches, and at-large members, the **Women's International League for Peace and Freedom US** will work with other organizations to develop and refine strategies and actions to advance and extend this Call.