

FACT SHEET

Rising global military expenditures

- Global military spending hit a record **\$2.7 trillion in 2024**, marking a decade of growth.
- In 2024, military spending surged across all five global regions, marking the steepest year-on-year rise since at least 1988. **Over 100 countries** increased their military budgets, with the top ten spenders alone accounting for 73% of the total.
- Despite making up about a quarter of the UN's Member States and nearly 20% of the world's population, African nations collectively account for less than 2% of global military spending.
- To better comprehend the \$2.7 trillion allocated in one year (2024) to global military spending:
 - It amounts to \$334 for every person on the planet
 - The size of the entire Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of all African countries
 - More than half the GDP of all Latin American countries
 - 750 times the 2024 UN regular budget
 - Almost 13 times the amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries in 2024
- If the current trend continues, military spending could increase to **\$3.5 trillion by 2030** and **exceed \$4.7 trillion, potentially climbing to \$6.6 trillion, by 2035.**
- A \$6.6 trillion spending is equivalent to almost five times the level at the end of the cold war, six times the lowest global level (1998), and two and a half times the level spent in 2024 (\$2.7 trillion).

Impact on the Sustainable Development Goals

- While military expenditure can be necessary to restore basic safety in contexts of acute violence or state fragility, long-term peace and security are most effectively achieved through diplomacy and inclusive and sustainable development that addresses root causes of conflict and promotes human dignity and resilience.
- Investing in sustainable development, human well-being and peaceful state relations is paramount for lasting peace, as unmet basic needs, human rights violations and inequalities directly fuel conflict and erode state legitimacy.
- The report makes a clarion call for investing in sustainable development because even a small fraction of military spending can make a big difference in people's lives.

A. Poverty

- For just between \$230 billion – \$280 billion annually, or around 10% of the \$2.7 trillion spent on militaries last year, the world could eliminate the extreme poverty gap globally.

B. Hunger and malnutrition

- Ending global hunger by 2030 would cost around \$93 billion per year. This is less than 4% of the \$2.7 trillion spent on militaries in 2024.
- For around \$1.2 trillion – around 5% of the \$21.9 trillion spent on global militaries in the last decade - the world could eliminate child malnutrition globally.

C. Health care

- In low- and middle-income and developing countries, a 1% increase in military expenditure is linked to an almost equal reduction in publicly financed health services.
- Fully vaccinating every child in the world would cost an estimated \$100 billion to \$285 billion. That upper-end figure, \$285 billion, is just over 10% of the world's annual military spending of \$2.7 trillion.
- The world could provide basic healthcare to everyone in low- and lower middle-income countries for \$370 billion annually, an amount representing around 14% of the \$2.7 trillion spent on global militaries during last year.

D. Water and sanitation

- For just \$114 billion per year - less than 5% of the world's \$2.7 trillion annual military budget - safe drinking water and sanitation could be accessible to people in 140 low- and middle-income countries.

E. Education

- Redirecting even a portion of the yearly increase (global military spending increased by \$229 billion between 2023 and 2024) could finance the entire annual education funding gap (\$97 billion) for low- and lower-middle-income countries twice over.
- For an estimated \$5 trillion, the world could fund 12 years of quality education for every child in low- and lower middle-income countries - an amount that is less than one quarter of what the world spent on its militaries in the past decade (\$21.9 trillion).

F. Jobs

- A US study found that while military spending generates jobs, other civil sectors can generally create more jobs with the same resources. For example, \$1 billion in military spending can create approximately 11,200 jobs in military, compared with 26,700 in education, 16,800 in clean energy and 17,200 in health care.

G. Economic growth

- A steep increase in military spending often slows a country's economic growth. Military spending is also a major driver of public debt, a burden that restricts the future development prospects for countries.

H. Gender equality

- High levels of militarism can contribute to a culture of violence, normalizing violence against women and girls, and creating negative long-term consequences for future generations.

I. Environmental degradation

- Active conflict with the extensive use of conventional weapons exacerbates environmental and wildlife devastation that can have long-lasting effects on the environment and people long after the fighting has ended.

J. Climate change

- The wealthiest countries are spending 30 times more on their militaries than on providing climate finance for the world's most vulnerable countries.
- Reinvesting 15% of global military spending (\$387 billion) is more than enough to cover the annual costs of climate change adaptation in developing countries.

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