



Open Statement to Members of the European Parliament “Stop EU funding to military R&D”

Dear Madam, Dear Sir,

On Tuesday 3 July, you will be asked to accept or reject the diversion of €500 million for the development of new weaponry, including drones and autonomous weapons technology, from the current EU budget (60% direct diversion, 40% unallocated margins).

We urge you to reject the proposal for a *European Defence Industrial Development Programme* (EDIDP), as EU subsidies to the arms industry for military R&D will not contribute to peace but rather exacerbate the global arms race:

being an industry-oriented programme, it will merely boost arms exports and ‘disruptive’ technology developments; this will in turn feed conflicts and divert public resources worldwide towards military expenditures, thus aggravating inequalities, violence and forced migrations.

This is not the EU and the world citizens want!

Dozens of thousands of EU citizens took action against EU funding for military research together with WeMove.EU and SumOfUs, and [more than 700 researchers signed a similar pledge](#). We urge you to listen to their voices and to the serious concerns of the peace community.

1. The EDIDP will favour the development of controversial weaponry like armed drones but also (fully) autonomous weapons

During the EDIDP trilogue, EU Member States fiercely opposed any clear and legally binding exclusion of controversial technologies like fully autonomous weapons as proposed by the Parliament. The final text only excludes arms prohibited under international law with no indicative list (art.6.6) and refers to fully autonomous weapons in the recital part only (recital 14). It paves the way for the funding of unmanned technology without any restriction regarding their use and export by Member States (recital 21) but also of fully autonomous weapons development (“killer-robots”). Indeed it is well-known that reaching an international ban on fully autonomous weapons is out of scope for the time being, despite [civil society calls](#) and [warnings by the scientific community](#).

This EU move also contradicts the [EP position on armed drones and fully autonomous weapons](#).

- By accepting the EDIDP, the EP will lose a unique opportunity to weigh in on the development and use of controversial weaponry beyond non-binding Resolutions.

2. The EDIDP will boost arms exports and trigger the global arms race, including of controversial and cutting-edge technologies

In the financial statement accompanying the EDIDP initial proposal, a “positive effect on arms exports” was already defined as an expected result of those subsidies. And the final text is even clearer:

it includes competitiveness on the “global market” as an objective (art.3), and it lists among the award criteria (art.10) “the contribution to the competitiveness and growth of defence undertakings (...) by creating new

market opportunities". It also promotes the "integration" of new economic actors (in particular SMEs and Mid-Caps) into the defence "global value chain" (art.17).

EU subsidies for arms will thus aggravate rather than help resolve over-production and duplication at European level, and arms dealers will put an even greater emphasis on exports for higher profitability.

In parallel the text explicitly preserves national government full sovereignty on arms export authorisations (recital 10) including for EU-funded military hardware.

- New and advanced EU-funded military technology could be freely used by Member States according to their geostrategic interests, and exported according to their own -disparate- arms exports policies.

3. The EDIDP will divert €500 million from civilian actions, and paves the way for a €13 billion Defence Fund

Despite the Parliament request that 100% of the EDIDP budget should be "fresh money", 60% (€300 million) will still be diverted from existing civilian programmes: the Connecting Europe Facility will lose €116.1 million, and Galileo €104.1 million, the rest coming from ITER (€63.9m) Copernicus (€12m) and Egnos (€3.9m).

The remaining €200 million will come from unallocated margins, which means that this money could have been used for other much needed programmes, including research on the root-causes of conflicts or peaceful prevention and resolution of conflicts: in contrast, only €4 million annually goes to local civil society actors for 'Confidence building, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation' under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP).

To add to this, the European Defence Fund for 2021-2027 will divert **€13 billion** from civilian priorities as it is expected that the total EU budget will at best remain the same, considering the impact of Brexit and the fierce opposition of a number of Member States to increase their national contributions.

- Depending on MS co-funding level, the arms industry will benefit between **€23 and €60 billion of new subsidies for military R&D over 10 years** (2017-2027), and the most favourable treatment ever granted under EU funding schemes (art.11).

Last but not least, [the arms industry has been discreetly but intensively lobbying to get access to EU funds](#) as we have regularly documented, and seized the opportunity of the current security-led context to push easy technological answers to complex societal challenges.

Thus, we urge all MEPs across political groups to get involved and stop EU funding to military R&D:

- **What is at stake is too important to leave it to a small group of 'expert MEPs' that would agree on an allegedly 'testing-programme' of minor importance, when it is a fundamental breakthrough for the arms industry**
- **The underlying political debate has been repeatedly postponed until the move has become a reality, until we will be told it is too late and that "we have no choice but go on with it". This is not our vision of how democracy works.**
- **It is about time that political representatives stop rushing ahead and think carefully, in order to make an informed political choice. Because there are peaceful options. And this starts with listening seriously to the voice of the peace community, no matter how disturbing it is for the dominant one-track thinking.**

We thank you for your attention.

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Further reading

An article by EU Observer: ['Killer robot' projects eligible for EU defence fund](#)

An article by EU Observer: [Defence firms 'reap benefits' of advice to EU](#)

A Q&A by the European Network Against Arms Trade (ENAAT) on the European Defence Fund:
<http://enaat.org/eu-defence-fund>

A report by the Belgian peace organisation Vredesactie about how the European Defence Fund was influenced by the defence industry:

http://istopthearmstrade.eu/en/mapping-arms-trade?securing_profits

ENAAT Position Paper on the EDIDP (12.12.2017):

http://enaat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/ENAAT-Position-Paper-on-EDIDP_dec2017_FINAL.pdf

Relevant peace groups Opinion articles and PR:

[European Defence Fund - the militarisation of EU science](#)

[Over 700 researchers call on colleagues to speak out against EU military research programme](#) (EN, FR, IT, SP)

[The European Defence Fund will merely benefit the industry and trigger arms race in autonomous weapons, says ENAAT](#) (DE, EN, FR, IT)

[Support for the arms industry will not make the world a safer place](#)

[Peace groups denounce new EC initiatives favouring the arms industry and triggering global arms race](#) (EN, FR)

[EU should give more funds to peace, not subsidise the arms industry](#)

[How the arms industry is staging a European coup](#)

[EU defence policy ready for psychiatric treatment](#)