

**Written Submission for the Pre-Budget
Consultations in Advance of the Upcoming Federal Budget**

By: The Canadian Voice of Women for Peace



August 2020

List of Recommendations

The Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW) recommends the following for Budget 2021:

- **Recommendation 1:** That the government apply a Gender-Based Analysis+ (GBA) to military spending and defence procurement and publicly report on this analysis
- **Recommendation 2:** That the government *not* meet the NATO 2% GDP target and reduce military spending
- **Recommendation 3:** That the government *not* spend \$19 billion to buy new 88 new fighter jets and that the government conduct a GBA+ for defence procurement
- **Recommendation 4:** That the government *not* spend \$70 billion to build 15 new surface combatants and that the government conduct a GBA+ for defence procurement
- **Recommendation 5:** That the government redirect military spending to urgent domestic and international social and environmental programs for a just, green and peaceful post-pandemic recovery

Introduction: The Problem of Military Expenditures in Canada

The Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW) is concerned about the dramatic increase in military spending over the past two decades. According to the Public Accounts of Canada, military spending has risen from \$8 billion in 1987 to \$31 billion in 2019 (See Appendix 1). Among all federal department and agencies, the Department of National Defence (DND) has disproportionately the highest budget.

According to the Public Accounts 2019 in Volume 2, Table 2a, DND's total expenses were \$31.7 billion.¹ However, for the same year, Global Affairs' total departmental expenses were \$2.4 billion, the Department of Environment Canada's total expenses were \$1.9 billion, and the Department of Women and Gender Equality's (WAGE) expenses were a mere \$41 million.

At our current level of military spending, Canada ranks 14th highest in the world according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's 2019 report *Trends in World Military Expenditures*.² Among all NATO members, Canada is ranked 6th highest on a cash basis for military spending.³

VOW is troubled that defence spending is set to increase even further. Under the 2017 defence policy, *Strong Secure Engaged*, the government announced a 70% increase to military spending. The defence policy explained that the government will recruit more soldiers and buy and build new weapon systems, such as fighter jets and warships, to maintain "high-end warfighting".⁴ VOW notes that the government blocked our inclusion in the roundtables for the defence policy consultations so we could only give a written submission.

The Public Accounts show that government prioritizes military spending and privileges DND over other social and environmental programs. Our recommendations confront this gross disparity. VOW also mentions the important occasional paper released this April by the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs entitled *Rethinking Unconstrained Military Spending*, which includes a feminist peace perspective that informs our submission.⁵

Recommendation 1: That the government apply a Gender-Based Analysis+ to military spending and defence procurement and publicly report on this analysis

In 2018, the government passed the *Canadian Gender Budgeting Act*.⁶ Article 2 of the *Act* requires the government to consider gender and diversity in resource allocation decisions and to make that information public to promote transparency and accountability. The *Act* also requires the government to table a report on the impacts on gender and diversity of budget measures. Yet in the 2019 *Gender Equality Statement* released after the budget there is no analysis of these impacts on military spending.⁷

The government has also developed a Gender-Based Analysis (GBA+) tool for departments to use to assess the gender and diversity impacts for government spending. Again, there is no publicly available information that shows the government has done a GBA+ on military spending or

defence procurement. Thus, VOW recommends that a comprehensive GBA+ is done for military spending and that this information be publicly reported.

VOW would like the government to consider the fact that it allocated to DND, a male-dominated institution, by far the most funding of any department at a base amount of \$29 billion in *Budget 2019* (see Table A2.13).⁸ By contrast, the Department of Environment and Climate Change's budget expense forecast was a paltry \$1.4 billion. WAGE's budget expense forecast is so low that it does not appear as a separate line item in Table A2.13 of the budget.

According to the *Public Accounts of Canada 2019*, WAGE's budget was \$41 million.⁹ WAGE's *Departmental Plan* for 2019-2020 shows staffing of just 194 full-time equivalents.¹⁰ The WAGE plan states, "Gender-based violence remains one of the most serious and pervasive human rights issues in Canada and the world." Yet the financial and human resources allocated to this department with a mandate to advance women's equality and prevent gender-based violence are minimal and insufficient.

According to DND's latest figures, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is comprised of 84% men and 16% women. DND is also the largest federal department with over 101,000 regular and reserve military personnel. Government spending disproportionately supports a department and work force that is dominated by men. Despite DND's efforts to recruit more women into CAF, women are not joining. The answer is not more ways to recruit women, but a re-allocation of public funding to support the vital work done by women in other critical sectors, such as healthcare and education.

Recommendation 2: That the government not meet the NATO 2% GDP target

VOW is troubled by the government's plan to further increase military spending. Under the 2014 Wales Summit Declaration, NATO members, including Canada, committed to build-up their defence budgets to 2% of GDP by 2024. At the current excessive level for defence expenditures, Canada is 1.2% of GDP. To reach the NATO 2% target, the government will have to increase military spending by an additional \$20 billion annually over the next decade, which is the same crucial period that Canada must drastically reduce carbon emissions to prevent catastrophic climate change and to recover from the pandemic. Canada's NATO interventions in Serbia, Afghanistan and Libya have been fomented violence and insecurity.

VOW recommends that the government *not* meet the NATO 2% GDP target and launch a phased reduction to military spending with a re-allocation to urgent social and environmental programs at home and abroad.

Recommendation 3: That the government not spend \$19 billion to buy new 88 new fighter jets

In July 2019, the federal government launched a \$19 billion competition for 88 new fighter jets. It is the second most expensive procurement program in Canadian history. In the running are Boeing's Super Hornet, SAAB's Gripen and Lockheed Martin's F-35 stealth fighter. The bids were due at the end of July 2020 and the winning bid will be selected in 2022.

Since 1997, Canada has paid over \$540 million USD (approximately \$707 million CAD) to the U.S. Department of Defense to remain a partner in the F-35 development consortium though Canada might not purchase this aircraft. This amount is *more* than the government has spent over the same period on the former Status of Women office and the new WAGE department combined.

VOW notes that former Deputy Minister of National Defence, Charles Nixon, argued that the fighter jet procurement should be cancelled because they are not necessary to protect the public or Canada's sovereignty. The fighter jet procurement is based on Canada's 2017 defence policy and influenced by Canada's relationship with the U.S. and membership in NATO; but it is not based on any risk assessment. As well, fighter jets emit excessive carbon emissions making it difficult for Canada to decarbonize.

VOW recommends that the government *not* spend \$19 billion on a fleet of unnecessary, carbon-intensive fighter jets and invest in urgent social and environmental programs.

Recommendation 4: That the government not spend \$70 billion to build 15 new surface combatants

The most expensive federal government procurement program in Canadian history is the *National Shipbuilding Strategy* (NSS). In October 2011, the government announced that the Irving Shipyard in Halifax will receive the lucrative \$25 billion combat package to build 15 surface combatants for the Royal Canadian Navy.

In February 2019, the government confirmed that Lockheed Martin will design Canada's surface combatants. In July 2019, the Parliamentary Budget Officer estimated that the cost of these warships has risen to at least \$70 billion much higher than originally planned. Royal Military College defence economist Dr. Berkok argues that most of this money will leave Canada and go to the American defence contractor for the manufacturing of the navigation and weapons systems in the U.S. The Irving Shipyard can only build the warship hull and frame.

The NSS supports an industry and a navy that are dominated by men. Warships also have severe adverse impacts on aquatic mammals and the marine environment that are ignored. Canada is investing in new warships while our oceans are in peril. VOW recommends that the government *not* spend \$70 billion on new warships, do a GBA for the NSS, and invest in a blue recovery to protect the oceans and in a just recovery to protect public health.

Recommendation 5: That the government redirect military spending to urgent social and environmental programs

The numbers clearly show that the government invests more for militarized security than in programs for social and environmental security. In 2019, Parliament passed the *Climate Emergency* motion that stated "climate change is a real and urgent crisis" and required the government to meet its Paris Agreement target and to make deep reductions in carbon emissions. Yet, federal spending does not match the urgency and gravity of this motion.

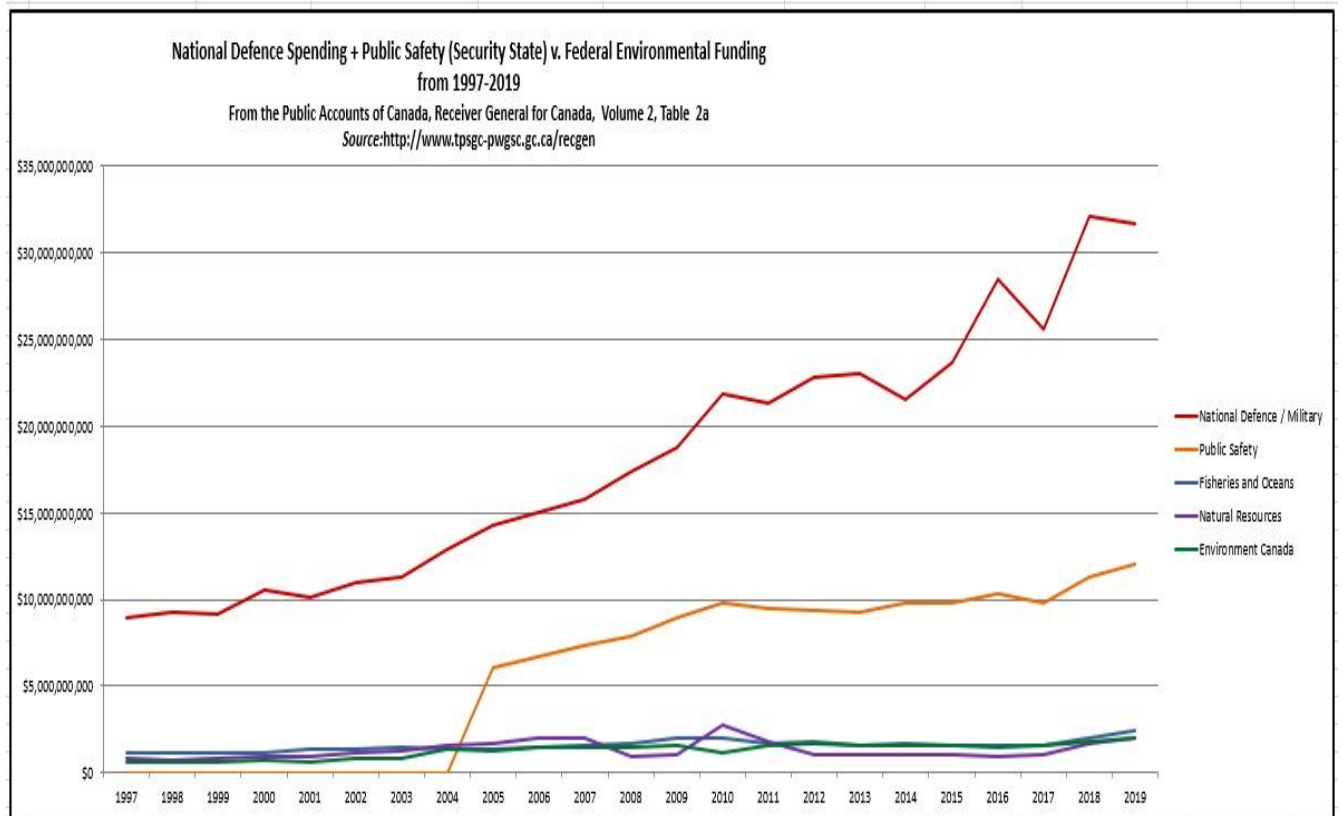
The 2016 *Pan-Canadian Framework for Clean Growth and Climate Change* stated that approximately \$132 billion over the next eleven years will be invested in green infrastructure and climate financing. This is a fraction of the amount of planned spending for Canada's military though the climate crisis is an immediate and catastrophic risk for the country.

Finally, the government should invest in a national early learning and child care system that women have been demanding for fifty years. The government should invest in an adequate affordable housing program to end homelessness and housing insecurity across the country. It should invest in our Indigenous communities that still do not have potable water, safe housing and adequate education and health services. The government should also invest in safe long-term care and home care, in post-secondary education (allow for the deferral of all student loans), in small and medium-sized businesses and green jobs. The budget priority must be a just post-pandemic recovery that helps our country build back better and creates a peaceful, green and caring economy. Canada must also contribute to help achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and increase Overseas Development Assistance to 0.7% of gross national income. The priority must *no longer* be military spending and weapons that harm people and the planet.

About VOW

The Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW) is the country's oldest women's peace organization. VOW was established in 1960 and is a non-partisan, non-governmental organization comprised of a network of diverse women across the country. VOW has consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council. We do research, organize events, run campaigns, and engage in domestic and international peace-making. For six decades, VOW has tirelessly advocated for a world without war. VOW stands for a feminist peace based on nonviolence, disarmament, diplomacy and common security with gender equality. You can learn more about us here: <http://vowpeace.org>

Appendix 1: National Defence Spending v Federal Environmental Spending (Public Accounts of Canada archives from 1999-2019)



End Notes

¹ *Public Accounts of Canada 2019*, Volume 2: <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/2019/vol2/s1/rceet-reet-eng.html>

² *Trends in World Military Expenditures, 2019*, SIPRI: https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/fs_2020_04_milex_0.pdf

³ Defence Expenditure for NATO Countries (2013-2019): https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2019_11/20191129_pr-2019-123-en.pdf

⁴ *Strong, Secure and Engaged*, 2017 Defence Policy, National Defence: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/policies-standards/canada-defence-policy.html>

⁵ *Rethinking Unconstrained Military Spending*, UNODA, Occasional Papers, No. 35, April 2020: <https://www.un.org/disarmament/publications/occasionalpapers/unoda-occasional-papers-no-35-april-2020/>

⁶ *Canadian Gender Budgeting Act*: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-17.2/FullText.html>

⁷ *Gender Equality Statement 2019*: <https://www.budget.gc.ca/2019/docs/plan/chap-05-en.html>

⁸ Budget 2019. Table A2.13: <https://www.budget.gc.ca/2019/docs/plan/budget-2019-en.pdf>

⁹ *Public Accounts of Canada 2019*, Table 2A: <https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/2019/pdf/2019-vol2-eng.pdf>

¹⁰ WAGE's *Departmental Plan for 2019-2020*: <https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/trans/account-resp/pr/dp-pm/1920/dp-pm-en.pdf>