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FOR AN ALTERNATIVE SECURITY POLICY

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## Motion Text

In the last decades, countries have used citizens' growing concerns over increasing threats to personal safety to amplify security policies based on endless militarisation, greater surveillance, tighter border controls, higher power for the police and intelligence services. The increasing militarisation is based on the hypothetical belief that an increased military capacity acts as a deterrent from conflicts.

Instead of ensuring real security, those current responses are threatening global peace, causing instabilities as it leads to other states increasing their own military capacity as retaliation. They are also violating human rights, the hardest hit being the most vulnerable and minorities. Civil society finds its voice reduced as protests and movements are often shut down by police violence, or categorised under terrorism definitions, which grants the police to take even more extreme measures.

FYEG's committed to peace, not only as the absence of war, but including a justice and human rights' perspective. There is no peace without tackling poverty, discrimination and social exclusion and the challenges linked to climate change. The huge costs that come with increased militarisation could be much better used in social and environmental policy, for people to actually feel the benefit of such expenditures. FYEG calls for an alternative vision of security policy, that means security for humans, not security for states.

## The Militarisation of the EU must stop

It is time for the European Union to put people over profit, centering human rights and dialogue as responses to conflicts, instead of short-term military and militarised interventions. Although the EU has limited competences in military issues, the liberalisation of the internal market, neoliberal politics, and old-school security policy have all supported the growth of the European Defence Industry and arms trade.

The arms industry has successfully lobbied to increase their access to several subsidy programmes, such as regional and research funds. Additionally EU funding to arm companies has been officialised through the creation of the European Defence Fund, a new EU fund especially dedicated to the support of defense and arms programmes and which is expected to receive 7 billion euros in the next EU Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

The arms industry also benefits from the weaknesses of EU Arms trade policies. The EU Common Position on arms export which puts human rights conditions to arms exports, is poorly implemented. No legal overview nor sanctions have been put in place when a country violates one of the established criteria and countries have developed different interpretations based on their own interest. Two directives put in place to smoothen arms trade inside the EU are further weakening national arms export policies. Combined with the fact that more and more arms are produced through transnational cooperation, they allow arms companies to bypass national rules and choose the export policies that work the best for them.

As a result, European countries produce and export more and more weapons, trade with countries that commit human rights violations and fuel several protracted conflicts including the war in Yemen, the biggest ongoing humanitarian crisis according to the UN.

At the same time, EU countries have conducted migration and border policies based on the same principles of militarisation. Governments have turned migration into a matter of national security which had to be treated by military means. The militarisation of border management, including through Frontex, has turned Europe into a fortress, causing the death of thousands of migrants every year. The externalisation of border management, through agreements such as the ones with Turkish government and Libyan authorities, have further amplified the violations of human rights at the borders of the EU.

These policies institutionalise racism and social stratification. FYEG stands for a migration policy that actually respects human rights and is based on the notion of solidarity. The European Union needs a paradigm shift in security policy - from state-centred to human security.

**Therefore we call for the European Union to:**

- End all arms production under the profit logic retaining only that necessary to comply with the international community's responsibility to protect;
- defund the European Defence Fund and allocate resources to actual human security, such as for example healthcare facilities and the climate emergency;
- end all subsidies for the arms industry, especially those through budget lines meant for research and development, such as Horizon Europe and other regional funds;
- make the Common Position on Arms Exports legally enforceable creating both more transparency and harmonization inside the European Union;
- develop a migration and borders policy that respects human rights and enhances solidarity, including through abolishing Frontex, ending the externalisation of EU borders, offering safe passage for migrants, tackling the roots of forced migration and developing a common asylum policy based on the principles of solidarity.

**Intersectional Feminism has to be a key principle of European Security Policy**

Militarization and patriarchy are closely linked to each other as patriarchal gender norms, combined with other global structures such as capitalism, racism and coloniality, play a key role in causing militarism and war. The increasing focus on militarised security not only falls short of addressing the structural causes of insecurity, including gender inequality, but actually contributes to violence, by inter alia, normalising the use of force to address (perceived) threats. It is therefore essential that European security policy is based on intersectional, feminist principles. Currently, the EU mainly treats gender equality as an afterthought that can (only) be added to inherently gender-neutral policies to promote peace and security. This not only fails to acknowledge the gendered dimensions of violence, conflict, and instability, but also the unlikelihood of the EU's efforts to promote peace and stability to be successful if they do not include a gender perspective. It is necessary to recognise gender inequality and the construct of masculinities and femininities shaped and perpetuated by conflict, patriarchy, militarism and violence, the political economy of war and the impact of neo-liberalism as structural root causes of violent conflict and instability and to put in place strong

countermeasures against this.

### **Therefore we call for the European Union to:**

- Fully recognize structural and psychological violence as security threat and adapt its security policy accordingly and gear it towards averting those types of security threats;
- actively pursue intersectional gender equality as a guiding principle of EU external action and place it at the heart of any conflict prevention policy and practice;
- ensure that women's rights are not framed as resources for peace and security, but as a goal in and of themselves;
- ensure that the rights, expertise, and needs of LGBTQI+ are fully and explicitly recognized and receive concrete financial, political, strategic and consistent support;
- ensure adequate financial resources to pursue gender equality as a guiding principle;
- align the EU external action on security with the 'Women, Peace, and Security' (WPS) Agenda and support the member states that have not yet done so to adopt National Action Plans on implementing the WPS Agenda;
- strengthen gender-sensitive civilian conflict prevention policies and tools and ensure that gender-sensitive conflict and/or context analysis is mandatory for all EU external action;
- enhance cooperation with and support to feminist civil society and ensure that women and LGBTQI+ rights defenders receive political, financial, strategic and consistent support;
- show political leadership towards implementing a Feminist Foreign and Security Policy, enhance internal and institutional capacities to do so, and ensure institution-wide gender parity.

### **Crisis preparedness**

We need a shift of paradigm in terms of security, putting more emphasis on crisis preparedness and resilience. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown that we are not prepared for the actual crises that come our way. We have been allocating a lot of budget to the defense industry, while underspending on areas where actual crises might erupt. Climate change must be regarded as one of the biggest security issues faced by Europe, and one which militarisation can't solve.

A strong action to fight climate change is an important part of our alternative vision of security, focused on humans. Reducing our ecological footprint, preventing climate change and ecological degradation through reduced emissions and strategies for the protection of ecosystems are key to preventive work. We do though also need to talk about how we should deal with the consequences that climate change forces us to face already today, which we will not be able to avoid.

It is also important to anticipate and adapt to the consequences of climate change, having in mind that the most vulnerable and least responsible for climate change will be hit the hardest. We need an equal and fair preparedness policy that ensures that everyone, regardless of background and class, has the opportunity to live a good life despite climate change. Water, food, medical supply and energy are areas where we believe that policy needs to be developed in order for us to achieve this.

Key policies are needed to make sure people's rights and wellbeing are not threatened by the climate crisis. It is by making our communities more resilient and less dependent that we will be ready to face the security problems climate change poses to our societies.

**Therefore we call for the European Union to:**

- Adopt an EU-wide strategy for food sovereignty, with the aim to ensure a higher local self-sufficiency, including plans for increased urban agriculture, develop short supply chains, local pacts between cities and farmers, as well as reducing the dependence on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides and on patented seeds;
- establish a common EU preparedness strategy, replicated into regional, national and local strategies, covering among others the national/local storage of food and medical supply, water prioritization plans in case of water shortages and plans for how to encourage the inclusion/strengthening of prepper/survival trainings in domestic educational policies of member countries;
- end European dependency on Russian oil, fossil fuel and insecure nuclear power, by e.g developing an European supergrid, prohibiting the establishment of new and/or non-finished Nordstream projects (and shutting down the current pipelines), and phasing out of nuclear energy.

## Information Security

Encompassed in the new era of security threats that we're facing there are also threats that directly attack our democratic freedoms. The emergence of cyberspace created a completely new dimension of conflicts and security threats which is not tackled seriously enough by the European Union at the moment. Cyberthreats are most often targeting individuals and not states, thus a security definition which only focuses on the protection of the 'states' as a constructs cannot longer be maintained and needs to be transformed towards a security approach centered around individual security. Just as little can a European security policy limit itself to the absence of physical violence, since there are no more physical conflicts in cyberspace. Psychological violence must therefore be clearly in focus. Furthermore, the strong gender-imbalance of witnesses of cyber-violence has to be addressed with concrete countermeasures. Facts like that women are 27 percent more likely than men to get harassed online and practices like the development of heteronormative, misogynist and even racist behaving Artificial Intelligence show that cyberspace holds the danger of reinforcing gender inequality and can even cause serious security threats to marginalized groups, BIPOC and women, inter and trans people. In ensuring a secure Europe for all where democratic rights are protected, information and cyber-related threats must be actively met with strong measures.

**Therefore we call for the European Union to:**

- Strengthen support for free journalism;
- adopt an EU-wide plan for implementation of debunking/fact-checking initiatives/activities in all member countries;
- adopt an EU-wide plan for how to encourage the inclusion/strengthening of media literacy/source criticism trainings in domestic educational policies of member countries;
- adopt an EU-wide plan for how to encourage the set-up of cross-generational media literacy

educational activities in all member countries;

- strengthen European cyber security cooperation, through by, among other things:
  - adopting a common EU cybersecurity strategy;
  - adopting a plan for common mobile payment system at EU level that can handle different currencies, federalizing the financial sector;
  - install an EU-wide investigation on how to ensure security in the balance between cash based and digital currency based payments
  - strongly surveil and ensure a non-discriminatory development of Artificial Intelligence
  - raise awareness on the gendered aspects of cyber violence, provide education e.g. on how to recognize and prevent cyber stalking
  - creating a stronger legal framework for behavior in cyberspace which criminalizes cyber stalking and harassment.