



OPEN LETTER to Euro-parliamentarians

Over 800 organisations call Euro-parliamentarians to move the money from war to peace

20 November 2025

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

Next week, you will be called upon to vote on a crucial issue, the 2026 budget, and other important votes and negotiations are coming up or already underway, including the next long-term EU budget (MFF 2028-2034) and a series of “omnibus packages”, that is, deregulation processes. All these proposals contain massive increases in military spending and gifts to the arms industry. We strongly ask you to oppose these dangerous moves and redirect resources to genuine peace policies.

We are Stop ReArm Europe, a coalition of more than 800 civil society organisations and movements from across Europe, representing a variety of sectors and/or political backgrounds, and we have something in common:

We want genuine security, i.e. security focused on human needs such as environmental and climate security, food and economic security, social and health security, community and political security - for Europeans and for all citizens of the world.

We want a transformational and just peace that includes the conditions for societies to flourish, such as addressing root causes of conflicts, good governance, liberty, and advancing human creative potential.

In short, a common security for both states and peoples.

As civil society actors, we are more determined than ever to do everything in our power to make this eventually happen; but we cannot do it alone.

We need your help as decision-makers; we need your help to make universal human rights values and international law the guiding principles of EU policies, and to put an end to decades of double-standard practices that have become so blatant in recent years.

The very history of European integration makes it particularly vulnerable to undue influence from corporate interests, as [demonstrated by numerous reports](#), and rearmament policies are no exception to this rule – quite the contrary.

The discreet but powerful lobbying of the arms industry played a [decisive role in the adoption of the first EU subsidies ten years ago](#), and its influence on both military and civilian European policies has [continued to grow ever since](#). The lobbying budgets of the ten largest arms companies [increased by 40% between 2022 and 2023](#). [In 2025 alone \(up to October\)](#), the Commission met with arms lobbyists 89 times to discuss rearmament and geopolitics, and only 15 times with trade unions, NGOs or scientists on the same topics. Meanwhile, MEPs met with the arms lobby 197 times between June 2024 and June 2025, compared to 78 times over the previous five years. As a result, the so-called “defence readiness” plan for supposed European autonomy ultimately boils down to subsidising large, often international, military companies, boosting production and increasing arms sales, including exports outside Europe.

The ‘defence omnibus’ package follows the same logic, as it further deregulates social and environmental norms as well as ethical and arms exports standards, diverts resources from civil programmes such as the Cohesion policy, and perverts sustainable finance principles, all in the interests of the armament sector. When will enough be enough for the arms industry?

In addition to indebting Europe, and therefore its citizens, for the benefit of the arms industry and an extractive and unfair economic model, **rearmament plans divert financial, human and political resources away from**

human security as well as from the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts and the major challenges facing humanity, from climate change to biodiversity loss or health crisis, to name but a few.

And **the proposal for the next financial framework takes a further step in that direction**, as it provides for a fivefold increase in the budget allocated directly to defence and space policies, in addition to civilian programmes being largely open to the arms industry. With the overall EU budget remaining virtually stable, this necessarily means a diversion of financial resources previously allocated to civilian policies, even if the profound restructuring of the MFF makes it very difficult to identify specific transfers.

Overall, the ReArm Europe plan of March 2025, along with all previous and subsequent policies related to it, is doomed to failure because it will essentially reinforce European and global insecurity, fuel the global arms race – which in turn fuels armed conflicts – and exacerbate climate change and environmental damage, [given the carbon and environmental footprint of the military](#).

Is this the future that you and us want for the next generation? We don't, and we are convinced that you do not either.

We therefore urge you to move the money from war to peace, in order to create the environmental, economic, social, political and diplomatic conditions for [positive peace, human security and common security](#).

There are a number of concrete steps and decisions you can take in the coming weeks and months to start preparing a better future. In particular we urge you to:

- 1. Reject the 2026 budget at the plenary vote next week, and ask for:**
 - ✓ a restart of negotiations to reduce subsidies for the arms industry and increase allocations to diplomacy and peaceful conflict prevention and resolution as a matter of urgency
 - ✓ the end of all exemption clauses that prevent the normal parliamentary oversight on all military-related programmes
- 2. Defend the social and environmental norms as well as ethical standards by opposing different proposals of the 'omnibus for defence', in particular:**
 - ✓ prevent the [EU Defence Fund to start funding testing activities outside Europe](#), as this would allow to use EU's taxpayers' money for testing weapons and military technologies in any war zone such as Gaza and Ukraine;
 - ✓ object before 29 November the [proposal to limit the definition of controversial weapons to prohibited weapons](#), as long as the EU funds the development of disruptive weaponry;
 - ✓ reject the [easing of arms transfers within the EU](#) which contradicts EU countries obligations under international law;
 - ✓ reject the [extension of exemptions and derogations](#) to labour, chemicals, environmental and other norms in favour of the arms industry;
 - ✓ reject the [easing of reporting obligations on the arms industry](#) within existing corporate responsibility and sustainability frameworks
- 3. Reject the current proposal of the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF 2028-2034) with regard to the following aspects:**
 - ✓ reject the Competitiveness Fund allocating €130 billions for arms and militarised space
 - ✓ reject the diversion of civil programmes, in particular civil research like Horizon as well as digital, mobility, Cohesion and other programmes, for military purposes
 - ✓ reallocate these funds to strengthening diplomacy and external aid, with a clear focus on fighting climate change, poverty and inequality as well as on protecting human rights and the environment, and a resolute and consistent support for the peaceful resolution of conflicts with the involvement of women, youth and marginalised communities
- 4. Strongly oppose [current pressures to significantly limit the capacity and legitimacy of civil society actors](#) to counterbalance corporate influence at EU level; the current balance of power is already heavily skewed in favour of corporate interests, and further marginalising civil society voices poses a direct threat to democratic debate in the public interest.**

If you wish to interact and discuss with us about the issues raised in this letter, please contact us at contact@stoprearm.org. We would be delighted to organise online gatherings where you could exchange with many of us about your vision, hopes and plans for peace.

We thank you for your attention and we look forward to hearing from you.

On behalf of the Stop ReArm Europe campaign

The coordination team of StopReArm Europe



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