



Women in Black
London

**No to military models of security
Yes to investment in climate justice,
poverty eradication
and diplomacy**

Do we need a national debate on how we understand 'security' and 'defence'? One model dominates – that of military security and ever-increasing defence spending. This has implications for many aspects of life, nationally and internationally and for the planet as a whole. Current UK military spending stands at £90 billion, and the government have pledged an increase 2.5% of GDP by 2027, and 3% in the next parliament. None of this 'defence' money has solved the conflicts of Ukraine, Russia, Iran, Israel and Gaza. Yet it is rare to hear any challenge to this military model of security or on the wastage and inefficiency in the current defence procurement.

In a BBC radio interview on 15 June, the World Health Organisation's Director Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said *"There is more spending in defence and less spending in global health or in public health or health security, which makes us vulnerable...Because the invisible enemy could be more impactful. Imagine, have you ever seen a war in recent memory that killed 20 million people? Why can't we come to our senses?"* He accused world leaders of approaching geo-political problems with might rather than investment in preventing poverty and disease.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct8klb>

Rising military spending is also worsening the climate crisis, which, alongside the threat of nuclear war, represents an existential threat to humanity and the planet. Armed forces are major contributors to global greenhouse gas emissions. Women are neglected victims of war in multiple ways, including the terrible tactics of rape and torture.

By contrast, the UK government has been cutting UK aid spending since 2021. In February further planned cuts were announced from 0.5% to 0.3% of GDP by 2027. There are also cuts in the 'soft power' approaches to security: diplomacy, advocacy, education and information sharing, dialogue, and the involvement of civil society networks in conflict prevention. The British Council and the BBC World Service have had their budgets cut despite the valuable social and cultural relations they have created between the UK and the global community.

Women in Black London reject models of security based on military might. The real threats we face as a nation and as a global community are climate change, climate migration and destruction of natural ecosystems; an increase in poverty both within and between countries and a lack of investment in national and global health and disease prevention. We urge our government to invest financial and research resources in countering these threats.



Women in Black hold vigils every Wednesday between 6-7 pm at the Edith Cavell Statue, opposite the National Portrait Gallery, St. Martin's Place, London WC2. Our vigils are silent, women-only and if possible, we wear black. We welcome all women who support our call for an end to militarism and war.

Contact us: [FB @womeninblack.london](https://www.facebook.com/womeninblack.london) <http://london.womeninblack.org/>

Donations for leaflets most welcome

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