How Militarised is Germany's Foreign Policy?

A POLICY BRIEF

CFFP · THE CENTRE FOR FEMINIST FOREIGN POLICY

IFFF

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Executive Summary

By providing an analysis of Germany's foreign and security policy priorities, decision-making processes, and multilateral engagement from a feminist perspective, this policy brief identifies entrenched militarisation in Germany's foreign and security policy. Ultimately, it argues that by failing to de-centre the well-being of the state in international security conversations, Germany continues to prioritise national (security) interests over the security of people and communities around the world. In this way, the German government not only refuses to take responsibility for the impact of its militarised action and the circumstances of those made vulnerable by militarised border control, the exporting of arms, and the existence of nuclear weapons but is also actively obstructing the path towards efforts that would demilitarise the international system, such as international disarmament initiatives. This briefing argues that Germany must abandon its militarised, state-centric conception of security in favour of approaches capable of addressing the root causes of conflict, eradicating inequality, and fostering inclusive and sustainable peace. It then provides concrete actionable recommendations that can be taken by the German government in order to:

1. Focus (politically and financially) on a feminist understanding of security;

2. Prioritise disarmament and truly restrictive arms export control;

3. Reverse the militarisation of the humanitarian space;

4. Design inclusive and democratic decision-making processes to shape peace and security policies; and

5. Foster a feminist understanding of security within the multilateral system.

Introduction

Internationally and nationally, Germany continues to enjoy a reputation of military restraint (Maull, 2019). However, feminist researchers and activists argue that this reputation is increasingly detached from reality. They criticise the government's increasing defence budget and the discrepancy between government spending on military procurement on the one hand and on civilian crisis prevention, including disarmament, on the other. Feminist actors also denounce Germany's consistently high arms exports, the government's distinct lack of support for international disarmament initiatives, such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), and the increasing tendency to address humanitarian concerns such as migration and flight with military means.

This policy brief will contribute to this discussion by analysing Germany's foreign and security policy priorities, decision-making processes, and multilateral engagement for security from a feminist perspective[1] – ultimately showcasing why it is fair to characterise Germany's foreign policy as militarised. The policy brief will also identify concrete policy recommendations for the next German government(s) on how to better align Germany's foreign policy with a feminist understanding of security. Due to the complexity of the topic, this policy brief does not intend to be exhaustive. Rather, it provides a feminist contribution to the debate on the militarisation of Germany's foreign policy by shedding light onto some of the government's most prominent fields of action.

The authors of this policy brief define German foreign policy as all of the interactions of the German government (in particular the Federal Foreign Office (AA), the Ministry for Defence (BMVg), the Ministry of Economy (BMWi), the Chancellery, and the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)) with other states, supranational organisations, multilateral forums, and civil society across a range of policy areas, such as defence, development cooperation, and trade. Due to the centrality of security for militarisation (see section 2.1), this paper focuses on Germany's security policies. In our analysis, we are guided by a feminist perspective that understands that peace and security can only be inclusive and sustainable through the achievement of gender equality and social, cultural and economic justice, as well as the eradication of all structural forms of violence – including patriarchy, racism, (neo- and settler-) colonialism, and (neo-) imperialism. A feminist understanding of peace and security is grounded in the knowledge that gender equality and a state's peacefulness are highly interdependent. As Rees and Kapur argue "the higher the level of gender inequalities within a state the greater the likelihood such a state will experience internal and interstate conflict" (2019, in Hudson et al., 2008/2009:138), or terrorism (Hudson, 2020).

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1 The authors recognise that a short policy brief will not be able to provide a comprehensive feminist analysis of Germany's foreign policy. By analysing priorities, decision-making processes and policy decisions, we, however, attempt to sketch out important aspects that are crucial to a feminist analysis, while at the same time acknowledging that a full-fledged analysis would require us to go much deeper in particular with regard to the power dynamics at play.

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Militarisation, Militarism, and Security

2.1 What is militarisation? What is militarism?

Militarisation describes the gradual cultural, symbolic, and material preparation for armed conflict (Enloe, 2000). If a state militarises its foreign policy, it invests in military strength and capability – for example, by building up its armed forces and weaponry and by seeking military bases and allies. Albeit most visible, military power does not only depend on the size of a state's army or the number of (heavy) weapons it possesses, but moreover on the naturalisation and normalisation of the military in all parts of society (Reardon 1996; Enloe, 2000). It also depends on "non-material, cultural or psychological aspects like moral values, behaviour patterns, [and] emotional appeals" known as militarism – a way of thought that acts on discursive and symbolic levels (Naidu, 1985:1). Militarism is guided by the idea that the use of force is an appropriate option to pursue state interests (Ibid). It is accompanied by and reinforces militarisation – and vice versa. The state's constant militaristic preparation for war is sustained not only through the discursive construction of 'enemies' and 'threats' (such as competing states, terrorism, or crime) in security rhetoric but also through the integration of militarism into other spheres of everyday life, for example with children's toys, games, advertisements, food labels, movies, and camouflage patterns in clothing (Enloe, 2000). Societies are prepared for the possibility of war from childhood onwards through the messaging they receive during education, in the media, and through cultural norms as the state works to continuously reinforce the notion that "military capability is the most meaningful and effective instrument for achieving any or all national goals, and that soldiers, weapons, and wars are the most necessary and noble tools for national protection and advancement" (Ibid:3.). This process is so pervasive and taken for granted that it becomes normalised, thus forming an unconscious part of everyday life (Enloe, 1983; 2007). Due to the scope of the policy brief we will focus on militarisation, while being mindful that a clear distinction is not always possible.

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2.2 What are the gendered effects of militarisation?

Militarisation significantly impacts all areas of society and politics and has distinct gendered dimensions. One of the most obvious consequences of militarisation is an increase in defence spending, as a militarised understanding of security links the well-being of the state to its military capability and equipment and the efficiency of its defence ministry and armed forces. This diverts crucial resources from endeavours that would actually make people more secure – such as the pursuit of gender equality and social justice or addressing the climate crisis (see section 3.3). Moreover, the focus on short-term results provided by the militarised security sector and the significant financial resources that are absorbed by them hinder the advancement of long-term solutions to conflicts and crises (Acheson & Rees, 2020). A militarised understanding of security also increasingly promotes militarised solutions to humanitarian issues, such as migration and flight (see section 4.1).

A less obvious consequence of militarisation is the impact it has on our understanding of what is considered 'strong' or 'weak' in foreign policy. The development of military capability is rooted in a gendered logic that associates masculinity with dominance, strength, rationality, and aggression and femininity with emotion, empathy, and weakness (Sjoberg, 2010). In this understanding, being 'masculine' represents a willingness and a legitimate right to use (armed) violence to protect those considered vulnerable – or 'feminine'. Prominent militaristic discourse, for example, idealises the idea of 'strong' soldiers united in 'brotherhood' and thus often provides the foundation for discrimination and exclusion within male-dominated armies (also producing what is known as militarised masculinity[1]). Furthermore, based on the same gendered logic, governments can be reluctant to commit to disarmament initiatives, which are often portrayed as expressions of 'weakness' or 'naivety'. Fundamentally, militarisation prioritises violent conflict resolution over non-violent means as well as the domination and the subordination of other states, peoples, or nations. It therefore reinforces harmful gendered stereotypes, exacerbates inequalities, and creates fertile ground for conflict to occur – with direct impacts on gender equality at home and abroad. For example, by legitimising violence as a means of dispute resolution, governments also legitimise violence in the home, making it harder for women and gender non-conforming people to leave abusive situations (WILPF, 2014; Charlesworth and Chinkin, 2000).

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1   Militarised masculinities "have been shaped through the military institution or establishment, and are built and constructed as a result of military service. Many societies believe that boys become men through initiation into the military institution. Militarised masculinity aspires and contributes to the accomplishment of power and violence, while the army is an institution, which produces violence" (Abrahamyan, 2017).

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2.3 What is a feminist understanding of security?[2]

Feminist perspectives challenge established definitions of security by questioning whose security concerns are being taken into account and how this security is being fostered. Feminist researchers and activists conceptualise security as a transformative and people-centred approach, broadening the concept of human security. Similar to human security, feminist approaches to security prioritise the advancement of rights, the protection of the environment and ecosystems, access to food and health services, as well as economic and cultural justice. However, although the concept of human security prioritises the needs and aspirations of people over states (United Nations, 2021), it fails to address gender inequality and other forms of discriminatory power relations (such as racism or colonialism) – because it uncritically accepts a universal understanding of the term "human". By contrast, a feminist understanding of security makes visible the multiple and intersecting identities that are often overlooked, marginalised and/or intentionally erased in security analysis (Hudson, 2005). This approach provides a comprehensive analysis of the complex and interdependent root causes of conflict and their gendered effects. It does so by amplifying the voices of civil society, peace advocates, and movements as well as marginalised communities to ensure just access to and fair distribution of resources and rights (WILPF, 2021). Consequently, a feminist understanding of security seeks to eradicate all forms of oppressive structures (including militarised foreign policy), rejects nuclear and conventional deterrence, and promotes inclusive decision-making processes at the national and international level.

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2   This policy brief does not engage with the question of whether or not military violence can ever be justified. This debate, which is beyond the scope of this briefing, is contested even among feminist circles. See, for example, Sjoberg (2008).

2.4 How can militarisation be measured?

Traditionally, militarisation has been measured according to quantitative indicators related to military strength or capability. Indeed, established indexes such as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) *Military Expenditure Database* use military spending as a sole indicator of militarisation. The Bonn International Centre for Conversion's (BICC) *Global Militarisation Index* goes slightly further in its analysis, combining an evaluation of expenditure with an assessment of military personnel and heavy weapons. It also assesses a state's military spending in relation to other factors such as GDP and health expenditure in order to rank countries on a scale of least militarised to the most (BICC, 2020). In addition to this, researchers often point to a country's arms exports as a clear indicator of militarised policy-making. Here, SIPRI's *Arms Transfer Database* provides an important overview.

Other (qualitative) attempts to analyse and categorise foreign policies include theoretical approaches such as the "civilian power" concept coined by Hanns Maull. Civilian powers actively contribute to the internationalisation of socially accepted norms to replace *politics through power* with *politics through legitimacy* (Harnisch, 2000). They are determined to act within alliances, are willing to give up sovereignty to supranational institutions, to (temporarily) put aside national interests, and are generally sceptical of military power as a means to solve (violent) political conflicts (Maull, 2019; Harnisch, 2000). According to Maull (and many others[3]), Germany continues to be a civilian power, even today (Maull, 2019).

While such approaches provide us with an important starting point for discussion, we would argue that they fail to capture the entire picture. Indeed, any quantitative measurement that focuses on military capability *only* is not consistent with feminist understandings of security. As outlined in our initial definition, militarisation influences so much more than defence spending and the procurement of weapons. Furthermore, the civilian power concept in particular has been criticised by feminist scholars for celebrating governments that merely *regulate* interpersonal or interstate violence but do not work to *abolish* violence and inequality[4] (Renvert et al., 2017). In the analysis that follows, we will move beyond 'traditional' measures to provide a comprehensive feminist analysis of Germany's foreign and security policy priorities as well as the government's decision-making processes, and policy decisions for international peace and security.

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3   See Bunde (2020), for example.

4   Within the concept of civilian power, resistance to military interventions – a crucial aspect of feminist security – can even be considered as outside of the concept of a civilian power when it is not in line with multilateral alliances (Maull, 2007).

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Germany's Security Priorities

3.1 What does the German government define as security?

In prominent policy papers published by the German government, security is defined and delineated in almost exclusively nationalistic and militarised terms. Consistent with state-centric approaches to security, Germany anchors its foreign policy priorities and decision-making in a central concern for the "territorial integrity" and "sovereignty" of the state. Presented in direct opposition to this, then, are the external threats that emanate from outside the country's borders and thus hinder the state's ability to "ensure the safety of its citizens" (The Federal Government, 2016:24). Indeed, the notion of "new threats" in the international security environment is a crucial component of the narrative constructed to justify Germany's recent increasing investments in defence. For example, the 2016 *White Paper on Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr* – the "key policy document on German security policy" (Ibid:15) – communicates an atmosphere of urgency and insecurity from its outset, referencing the "profound changes in the security environment" (Ibid.) that have made Germany's security climate "more complex", more "volatile", more "dynamic", and thus more "unpredictable" than ever before (Ibid:28). "Cyber warfare", "transnational terrorism", "global pandemics", and "uncontrolled" or "irregular migration" are all cited as threats with fundamentally destabilising potential (Ibid.). The *White Paper* therefore emphasises the need for Germany's armed forces to "adapt" to changing conditions and for the state to respond with tangible commitments to build "a Bundeswehr that is modern and fit for the future" (Ibid:9). This idea, which is what we identify as the militarisation of

the security discourse[1], is reiterated throughout policy documents across the government (such as the *2019 Military Equipment Export Report*) and is designed to create an image of instability in the international system in the context of which militarisation (and in particular, increased defence spending or the legitimisation of the Bundeswehr) is the only logical response. For example, in a 2021 position paper titled *Bundeswehr der Zukunft*, German Minister of Defence, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer, suggested that "the Bundeswehr of today is not sufficiently prepared for the challenges and threats of tomorrow" (Federal Ministry of Defence, 2021:6). Her conclusion was that, "a modern, fully operational Bundeswehr requires a *consistently growing defence budget* that makes reliable planning possible" (Ibid:5, emphasis added).

Ironically, although rightly identified by the German government as one of the most pressing challenges to international peace and security, the buildup of arms and weapons of mass destruction is also proposed as a solution to 'new' security challenges and confrontations in the international system. Reiterating Germany's enduring commitment to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), for example, the *White Paper* emphasises that the alliance and its members will "continue to rely primarily on deterrence to counter external threats", hailing the development of strategic nuclear capabilities as the "ultimate guarantee" of the security of NATO's members (The Federal Government, 2016:64). Although not one of the nine nuclear-armed states of the world, Germany makes an active contribution to the preservation of the nuclear order by hosting US nuclear weapons at its military air base in Büchel under the premise of what is known as *nuclear sharing* (Deutscher Bundestag, 2017). The government has repeatedly justified this agreement with reference to the NATO deterrence model, describing the presence of the weapons on German soil as a "nuclear protective shield" for Europe and a guarantor of "stability in our neighbourhood" (CDU/CSU, 2021:8). However, feminist scholars have long challenged this concept of nuclear deterrence in international politics. As Director of Reaching Critical Will, the

Disarmament Programme of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), Ray Acheson (2019:80) maintains, the deterrence model creates an abstracted image of nuclear weapons as something inherently protective, detracting attention from the fact that they are "tools of genocide, slaughter [and] extinction". Nuclear weapons have only ever inflicted harm and suffering - destroying the environments and livelihoods of marginalised communities that have been exposed to nuclear testing and detonation (Standke-Erdmann & Scheyer, 2020). The deterrence argument can therefore invite only one question: *whose* security are we really referring to?

→ 3.2 Whose security is being prioritised?

Highlighting the human (and ecological) impact of conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction is crucial from a feminist perspective as it allows us to understand that an abstracted idea of state security grounded in conventional and/or nuclear deterrence constitutes a direct security threat to states not partaking in any deterrence relationship - as well as all humans (based on Hoffmann-Axthelm, 2016). It also allows for a discussion of the *real* impact of weapons on all persons at all times (instead of discussing whether a target was lawful or unlawful in armed conflict) and enables us to move beyond the mere regulation of the possession and use of arms, towards a wider discussion on disarmament and demilitarisation (Arimatsu, forthcoming). However, the militarised, state-centric understanding of security that underpins German foreign policy, has prevented the government from engaging with the discussion on the human impact of arms in any meaningful sense. Indeed, Germany has actively resisted international disarmament efforts and refuses to end its arms exports or to even implement sufficient restrictions. Instead, the government chooses to perpetuate ideas of deterrence in international fora and to prioritise state interest over the security of individuals and communities around the world.

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1   A discursive process through which states portray the use of military force as justified, necessary, or "normal" (Kuehn, 2020).

3.3 Nuclear Disarmament

In the final document of the 2010 Review Conference of the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT), state parties expressed deep concern about "the catastrophic humanitarian[2] consequences" that would result from a nuclear detonation (NPT/CONF, 2010/50:12). This was the first time these kinds of concerns had been voiced within the framework of the NPT and prompted a series of international conferences that focused specifically on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Ultimately, the momentum to shift the focus from nuclear weapons as 'security guarantors' to nuclear weapons as a source of insecurity for humanity culminated in the adoption of the *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons* (TPNW) by the UN General Assembly in 2017. The German government participated in all three of these conferences (Oslo in 2013, Nayarit in 2014, and Vienna in 2014). However, it failed to prioritise the security implications of nuclear weapons for people (and the environment) around the world. For instance, unlike 127 other states, Germany has not signed the *Humanitarian Pledge*, a promise initiated by Austria during the Conference in Vienna, to "stigmatise, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons in light of their unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks" (BMEIA, n.d.). Germany also did not ratify or even participate in any of the negotiations on the TPNW and has, since 2018, "consistently voted against an annual UN General Assembly resolution that welcomes the adoption of the treaty (…) and calls upon all states to sign, ratify, or accede to it "at the earliest possible date" (ICAN, 2021).

Thus, instead of supporting some of the most important international disarmament initiatives in recent history, the German government continues to promote the nuclear deterrence argument, thus disregarding the immense human suffering caused by nuclear weapons. In the government's statement in Nayarit, for example, Germany stressed that the security dimensions of nuclear weapons are just as important as the humanitarian dimensions and attributed the prevention of the armed conflict between the NATO-alliance and the Warsaw Pact partly to the existence of nuclear weapons in the international system (Federal German Government, 2014). Furthermore, in response to a parliamentary inquiry by the Green Party in 2013, the German government differentiated between the humanitarian consequences of *the possession* of nuclear weapons and the humanitarian consequences of *the use* of nuclear weapons, emphasising the 'protective' nature of the weapons themselves. The government further stressed that there are 'legitimate' and 'legal' uses of nuclear weapons – rejecting the notion that nuclear weapons should not be used "under any circumstances" (Deutscher Bundestag, 2013).

3.4 Arms Export Control

Germany's understanding of security further prevents the government from adopting a truly restrictive arms export policy that acknowledges that arms are fuelling violent conflict across the world. The international arms trade reinforces structural inequalities, facilitates gender-based violence (GBV) and renders people – and in particular politically marginalised groups – insecure around the world (Small Arms Survey, 2012). For example, on average, firearms are used in one-third of all femicides worldwide (Ibid.). Despite these indisputable facts, Germany continues to be the fourth biggest exporter of arms worldwide (2015-2019) (SIPRI, 2020), justifying its actions in the name of "[l]egitimate security policy and alliance policy interests" (BMWi, 2021). Analyses by civil society actors and academics have demonstrated that, over the last decades, the German government has repeatedly authorised arms exports which violate international law (Wisotzki,

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2 While a feminist analysis welcomes the discussion on the impacts of conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction on humans instead of states, this can only be a starting point, as not all humans are equally impacted. For example, racialised communities in particular have suffered from nuclear testing. These structural power inequalities must be addressed in order to foster feminist disarmament and arms control.

2020; Niebank 2018). In March 2018, for example, Black Brazilian politician and human rights activist Marielle Franco was assassinated in Rio de Janeiro. While the case of her murder remains unsolved, the public prosecutor of Rio de Janeiro believes that Franco was killed with a MP5, a German submachine gun produced by Heckler & Koch, often used by the Brazilian military and the Policia Militar (Steinmetz, 2020). The following year, Germany continued its business as usual, exporting nearly €83 million worth of military goods and even overtaking the US as a primary exporter of arms to Brazil. The reaction of the German government stands in stark contrast to Switzerland, for example, where the killing of Marielle Franco caused the government to shut down the already licensed construction of an ammunition factory in Brazil (Gurk, 2021; SRF, 2018). By refusing to engage with international disarmament initiatives or to implement a sufficiently restrictive arms export policy, Germany is actively contributing to the militarisation of the international security system. The government is therefore failing to take seriously the root causes of violent conflict, rendering millions of people insecure.

→ 3.5 Whose security is Germany investing in?

This privileging of militarisation over feminist approaches to security is also reflected in the German government's allocation of funds. Feminist security policy requires the prioritisation of resources for the protection of the environment and ecosystems, access to food and health services, economic, social, and cultural justice, as well as for disarmament and non-violent conflict transformation initiatives. This section will demonstrate that for Germany, defence spending continues to take precedence.

In the last twenty years, Germany's defence budget has almost doubled, rising from €24.3 billion in 2000 to €45.65 billion in 2020. The German Ministry of Defence now possesses the third largest budget of all government ministries and receives its highest amount of funding since 1993 (Collini, 2021). Even in the context of the worst pandemic in over a century, defence spending has continued to increase, rising by an additional €1.3 billion between 2020 and 2021. In comparison, the combined budgets of the Federal Foreign Office (AA) and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) amounted to only €18.73 billion in 2021, with the AA[3] – responsible for diplomacy, crisis prevention and humanitarian aid – receiving only €6.3 billion and the BMZ €12.43 billion (Bundestag, 2021b). Surprisingly, the budget of the BMZ will also not increase next year, even though it is currently responsible for providing support to partner countries through the COVID-19 Emergency Programme (Bundestag, 2021c). The Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, responsible for tackling the climate crisis (which is already rendering millions of people insecure) has a budget of only €3.2 billion. From this, only €776 million was spent on climate change (BMF, 2021c).

In 2020, Germany spent only €40 million on disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control, and only €400 million on crisis prevention, stabilisation[4], and peace support (BMF, 2021b). According to the calculations of the peace organisation *Bund für soziale Verteidigung* (2019; 2021), Germany spent a total of €5.13 billion in 2020 for civil conflict resolution, which includes peace research institutions, UN agencies, the strengthening of civil society, humanitarian aid and the Civil Peace Service (CPS). The CPS, intended as an alternative to military personnel, is a programme run by nine German peace and development organisations that

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3   The authors acknowledge that spending by the AA can also contribute to a militarised understanding of security, for example by investing in UN Peacekeeping missions, but believe that the comparison still reflects a useful analysis of political priorities. Furthermore, it is important to stress that while humanitarian aid and development cooperation can contribute to foster equality, development aid and work can perpetuate (neo-)colonial structures of dependency and exploitation, which actively need to be decolonised. The publication of PeaceDirect (2021) can serve as a critical starting point for this discussion.

4   "Stabilising missions" are an indicator of militarisation in and of themselves as they represent a blurring of boundaries between military and civilian capacity. Section 4.1.1 explores this idea in further detail.

sends experts committed to human rights, dialogue and peace to conflict affected areas (ZFD, 2021). In comparison to the €7 billion spent on military procurement (BMF, 2021c), the CPS received only €55 million in 2021 (Bundestag, 2021c). Indeed, over the last three years, CPS funding has not increased despite the proliferation of crises and conflicts around the world. Around 3,500 German soldiers were deployed in 12 Bundeswehr missions in July 2021 (Bundeswehr, 2021), while only 350 people were employed by the CPS in 43 countries.

In sum, the spending of the government demonstrates that Germany continues to prioritise militarised solutions to (in)security over non-violent conflict prevention, diplomacy, and mediation. It therefore fails to allocate sufficient resources to address the root causes of conflict such as the climate crisis, social inequalities, and gender inequality.

→ 3.6 Who is influencing Germany's foreign policy?

In our discussion regarding the character of Germany's foreign and security policy, it is also crucial to consider the actors that are *benefiting* from the government's increasing reliance on militarised action. Through this analysis, we can begin to understand who may be *influencing* political decision-making and whose interests are really being taken into account at the policy level.

Feminist scholars and activists have long cautioned against the dangers of an increasingly persuasive military-industrial complex, a term which refers to the relationship between a state's military and the defence industry that arms it. The military-industrial complex is best described as a "marriage of war and profit" and is capable of wielding significant influence in the context of a capitalist international system (AWID, 2013). Indeed, as Jacqui True (2015:1) has argued, "exposing the connections between state military complexes and transnational business will enable us to better understand how power works to fuel and fund conflicts around the world". In other words, it will allow us to understand the mechanisms that allow corporate interests to flourish at the expense of international peace and security and the intentionality behind the securitised policy narratives that perpetuate cycles of international militarism and militarisation. The manufacturing, buying, and selling of weapons worldwide is a major industry. In 2020, global military expenditure stood at almost $2 trillion (€1700 billion) (SIPRI, 2021). And the German defence sector forms a notable part of this market. According to the US Department of Commerce, Germany has

the third largest aerospace and defence market in Europe (after the United Kingdom and France) with its 2018 revenues standing at nearly €40 billion (Privacy Shield Framework, 2021). Furthermore, the government's consistently increasing defence spending is projected to propel industry growth even further with a predicted market growth rate of 9 percent in the next five years (Mordor Intelligence, 2021). Thus, with considerable interest in and substantial gains to be made from the militarisation of Germany's foreign and security policy, it is unsurprising that German defence industry actors have been accused of attempting to exert inappropriate influence on the security and defence agenda. In their 2020 report, *Defence Industry Influence in Germany*, Transparency International (TI) documented the various "systemic vulnerabilities and influence pathways" through which the German defence industry is able to do exactly this (2020:1). In short, it concludes that despite the constitution demanding strong parliamentary and government control over policy and procurement, pathways of influence are created through "scarce government resources or expertise, inadequate enforceable regulation governing conflicts of interest, and feeble monitoring and accounting of political contributions and lobbying activity by businesses" (Ibid.). For example, the movement of public sector workers to the private sector (and vice versa) creates a substantial window of opportunity for defence industry actors, creating a phenomenon known as the "revolving door" (Hoffman, 1977). The concern is that as government officials move into positions of power in the defence industry, they will continue to exert control over the policy agenda through networked access to decision-makers in government. In 2015, a year after retiring as Federal Minister of Economic Cooperation and Development, Dirk Niebel became a chief international lobbyist for Rheinmetall, Germany's largest defence manufacturer (Transparency International, 2020:17). As the TI report explains, as an ex officio member of the National Security Council, Niebel would have been able to vote on the authorisation of arms exports involving his new employer (totalling over €10 billion) (Ibid.). In addition to this, the lack of technical expertise and sufficient staffing in the civil service has created a knowledge gap that forces the government to rely increasingly on consultancies and the advice of think tanks that are often funded by the defence industry. The Ministry of Defence's reliance on consultancies is a major point of contention in Germany and has been the source of nation-wide scandal in recent years. In 2014, while a partner at the consulting firm McKinsey, Katrin Suder was appointed as State Secretary for Planning and Equipment by the then Federal Minister of Defence Ursula von der Leyen. While in her new position, McKinsey continued to receive work as a contractor and subcontractor on high-profile advisory projects for the Ministry of Defence. As news reports have explained, the *Berateraffäre* ("consultant affair") and the parliamentary inquiry that followed, revealed a buddy system between high-ranking ministry representatives and consultants, with companies such as McKinsey and Accenture at the centre. As TI (2020:2) concludes, "the transfer of key duties and expertise towards the private sector through the outsourcing of tasks carries the risk of a gradual erosion of the government's ability to make independently informed choices on the management of defence capability and resources". It also contributes to a cycle of policy-making that better represents the interests of defence industry actors than the (security) interests of the German population. Indeed, on the whole, public opinion in Germany is relatively anti-militaristic. For example, 66 percent of Germans do not support the concept of nuclear deterrence and are therefore sceptical of Germany's nuclear sharing agreement (Munich Security Conference, 2021). 80 percent of Germans do not support arms exports to conflict regions and 64 percent of citizens do not support arms exports at all (Stockholm Centre for Freedom, 2018).

Germany's Enagement for Security

4.1 Militarising the Humanitarian Space

In addition to a distinct lack of concern for the humanitarian and gendered consequences of militarised action, entrenched militarisation in a state's foreign policy can also be identified through an analysis of its approach to human rights issues and humanitarian crises. The following section will analyse the ways in which militarisation can metastasise to take shape outside of traditional conflict settings, thereby justifying and normalising military presence beyond "traditional" missions.

4.1.1. MILITARISING STATE-BUILDING

By channeling vast amounts of funding into the defence sector at the expense of all others, states create an imbalance in their capabilities, leaving them with 'no option' but to turn to their most developed and sophisticated branch in times of crisis. In other words, the consistent prioritising of militarisation gives rise to a 'militaristic lens' through which all issues are understood. The final result, as Rosa Brooks (2016:20) argues, is a situation in which states "increasingly treat the military as an all-purpose tool for fixing anything that happens to be broken". A telling example of this is an increasing emphasis on the importance of *Stabilisierungsoperationen* ("stabilising operations") as a key component of Bundeswehr responsibility. Stabilising operations are a relatively new kind of military command that emphasise the military's role in establishing "civilian security, basic services, and government legitimacy, through non-traditional as well as… traditional military means" (Ibid:92). They are grounded in an emerging understanding of a new security environment in which "violence occurs in a continuum" and therefore cannot be understood in isolation from developmental or humanitarian concerns (Ibid.). While a more expansive understanding of the drivers of violent conflict is certainly welcomed by feminist scholars, the militaristic 'solution' is a cause for concern. As Rosa Brooks continues, these missions represent a "dangerous (...) slide away from the military's core competencies", providing

"further evidence of the militarisation of... foreign policy", and "the devaluing and evisceration of civilian capacity" (Ibid:85). Indeed, as the Gunda Werner Institute has maintained, "the Bundeswehr (...) is blurring the boundaries between civilian and military missions and extending its sphere of operations into civilian areas, development, and foreign policy" (2009). This can be understood only as the militarisation of the humanitarian space (The European Union Institute for Security Studies, 2010).

In the 2021 Implementation Report on the *Leitlinien für Zivile Krisenprävention* ("Guidelines for Civil Crisis Prevention"), the German government is said to be contributing to lasting stability in conflict areas such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo, and Yemen by "empowering regional actors to assume responsibility for their own security" (The Federal Government, 2021:175). In particular, the document references the Bundeswehr's "extensive" engagement in the Sahel region, where it claims that Germany's military is working to build the "capacities of the armed forces in the region" and to "support the return of the state" (Ibid:51). During parliamentary debates, Michael Roth, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, has described Germany's contribution to the stability of the region as "decisive" and "highly valued" – an assessment which strays far from the reality of the situation on the ground (Rosa-Luxemburg Stiftung, 2021). As Médecins Sans Frontières (2017) have maintained, Germany and the other international forces have adopted an approach that interweaves humanitarian and development activities with peace and counter-terrorism strategies and are therefore instrumentalising humanitarian action for military objectives. The result is the marginalisation of the civilian component, limited scope for humanitarian initiatives, and direct implications for local populations in need (Gauthier Vela, 2021). For instance, aid organisations on the ground have reported that their ability to provide assistance is being hindered "by an increasingly militarised security landscape marked by confusion between military and humanitarian actors" (The New Humanitarian, 2019). Certainly, the increased association between the two in Mali has led to growing mistrust of and

violence against humanitarian actors as well as the delegitimation of their work[1]. In addition to this, many have argued that excessive military action from international forces has led to the further destabilisation of the region (Venturi and Alassane Toure, 2020). Indeed, 2020 was the deadliest year on record in the Sahel region, with the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) reporting over 2,400 civilian casualties – the majority of whom were killed by security forces rather than extremist groups (International Federation for Human Rights, 2021). In the last three years, the number of forcibly displaced people in the region has increased by four times, now standing at over two million (Rosa-Luxemburg Stiftung, 2021). 2020 and 2021 saw two military coups from the Malian army as well as continued political unrest and instability.

4.1.2. MILITARISING BORDERS

In the same report, the Foreign Office also makes reference to the German government's participation in "Sea Guardian", the NATO Maritime Security Operation in the Mediterranean and its support for NATO activities in the Aegean Sea. Both operations, similarly characterised as 'stabilising' endeavours, are said to support "Maritime Situational Awareness and security capacity building as well as Maritime Counter Terrorism" and "to contribute to maritime surveillance and to the coordination of search and rescue services in the context of displacement and migration" respectively (The Federal Government, 2021:173). The involvement of security actors like NATO in issues related to migration is another clear example of the militarisation of the humanitarian and civilian space. A militarised naval blockade of the only route away from violence does not prevent migrants from attempting to escape conflict in their country of origin, it merely forces individuals into even more insecure circumstances as they are left with no choice but to make their journey along increasingly dangerous routes. At the EU level, Germany is actively driving the incremental militarisation of the EU's external borders by supporting the extension of the EU's border and coast guard agency Frontex' mandate to 10,000 staff as well as the agency's equipment with security and intelligence technologies.

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[1] This dynamic has been aggravated further, for example, by the intentional incursion of the military into the humanitarian realm through Quick Impact Projects aimed at "winning the hearts and minds" of the local population (Médecins Sans Frontières, 2017).

In addition, the government is supporting the gradual externalisation of the EU's border regime to third countries. In this context, Germany provides training for border security personnel, financial support and, most importantly, military equipment in the form of surveillance and identification technologies to African and Middle Eastern countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Niger, Mauritania, Chad, and Morocco (TNI & Stop Wapenhandel, 2018). Unsurprisingly, actors in the arms and security industry, such as Heckler & Koch, have identified the EU's external borders as an increasingly profitable market and are beginning to invest heavily into the development of new border surveillance and military technologies in cooperation with Frontex (Frontex Files, 2021). These developments ignore what feminist and critical migration scholars have demonstrated for several years now. Militarised borders create an increasingly violent environment, perpetuate forms of gendered insecurities for migrants through discriminatory border practices and cause a large number of deaths not only in the immediate vicinity of the EU's external border region but also thousands of miles into the African continent (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, 2019; Gyan-Addo et al. 2021). In sum, border externalisation and militarisation is merely an "out of sight, out of mind" approach (Pro Asyl, 2016) that works to invisibilise and dehumanise refugees and migrants and the human rights violations committed against them, ultimately allowing states to wipe their hands of responsibility for the wellbeing of those experiencing violence.

4.2 Militarising Multilateralism

Analysing which initiatives, ideas, and projects Germany is supporting at the multilateral level can also provide important insights into the government's foreign policy priorities. Based on two examples – Germany's role during its EU presidency and its non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council – this section will make visible Germany's militarised multilateral engagement.

4.2.1. GERMANY'S EU PRESIDENCY

Since 2016, EU member states have been working to strengthen their cooperation within the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) with the intention of developing and improving access to "hard military instruments" in the name of collective security. Feminist scholars and activists understand this development as the militarisation of the EU's external action and a sign that the character of the European Union is becoming increasingly militarised. This shift is reflected in the current strategy for the EU foreign and security policy, the *Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy*. While its predecessor, the *European Security Strategy* (2003), aimed for a "secure Europe" in a "better world", the *Global Strategy* drops the ambition to work towards a "better world". In the latest version, the strategy speaks only of a "stronger Europe" and identifies "security and defence" as primary priorities in this regard (EEAS, 2018; Davis, 2019)). After the publication of the *Global Strategy*, the Commission adopted the *European Defence Action Plan*. One of its core proposals is the *European Defence Fund*, a fund designed to support military research and the development of new military equipment. This circumvents the prohibition of financing under Article 41(2) of the *Treaty on the EU*, which states that no expenditure with military implications may be paid from the EU budget[2]. The Fund is intended for joint armament projects of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), an instrument to make CSDP binding and strengthen EU commitment to NATO.

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2   The prohibition acts in accordance with the Treaty's Preamble to support peace and security in the world and reflects the original intention to establish the EU as a peace project.

According to findings by Stop Wapenhandel (2021), the major beneficiaries of the Fund are Germany, France, Italy and Spain and several German defence and research companies, especially the German Fraunhofer Institute, which actually encouraged the European Commission to create it.

Germany, who initiated and designed PESCO together with France in 2017, has committed to an increase in its defence budget and to facilitate the provision of troop units to participation in large-scale strategic armament projects (Wagner, 2019). Germany continues to play a dominant role in PESCO, coordinating 6 out of 46 of its projects (BMVg, 2020). Among them is the Future Combat Air System (FCAS), which, in particular, is heavily criticised by feminist civil society. This multi-role combat aircraft will be accompanied by an unmanned escort aircraft as well as new communication and weapon systems, which will also include autonomous drones (which could become armed in the future). Germany's position on armed drones and militarised artificial intelligence (AI) is contested. Although Federal Foreign Minister Heiko Maas (AA, 2020b) has officially advocated for the outlawing of fully autonomous weapon systems, the fact that Germany is co-financing and advocating the development of FCAS at the European level makes a real commitment to a binding treaty seem rather unlikely (Rudi, 2021). Indeed, together with France, Germany has been advocating for a 'code of conduct' instead of a ban in UN negotiations (Küchenmeister, 2019). Generally, from the government's perspective, the military use of AI is understood as an important 'opportunity' in the field of warfare that Germany should not miss (Küchenmeister, 2019). These positions are extremely worrying from a feminist point of view. Fully autonomous weapon systems lack crucial human qualities such as "moral reasoning, empathy, compassion, mercy" (WILPF, 2020, p. 6) and therefore pose serious questions about whether the weapons can be used in line with international humanitarian law, which itself only regulates (and does not prevent) violent conflict.

During Germany's EU Presidency in the second half of 2020, the development of the CSDP was declared a central goal. The German government therefore actively supported the creation of the European Peace Facility (EPF). In addition to financing peace missions, the EPF enables military training and the provision of military equipment for the armed forces or infrastructure for security purposes in third countries and international organisations (EEAS, 2021). While Article 41 (2) of the *Treaty on the EU* forbids expenditures of the EU budget for military means, the EPF as an instrument makes military expenditure and exports possible for the first time in EU's history. As Greenpeace has argued, this is especially beneficial for the German arms industry as it allows them to bypass German arms export control (Hochgesand, 2021), which is often described as 'too restrictive' by the industry itself (Zeit Online, 2019). Crucially, such developments, in which Germany has played a key role, contradict the very intention of the European Union as a peace project. Civil society organisations from Africa and Europe together have raised concerns that the militarisation of security concerns in fragile areas such as in the Sahel region, can lead to more human rights abuses and insecurity for the civilian population (Brot für die Welt, 2021). As Care International (2019) has maintained, this type of military assistance "can harm peace and development and rarely provides its intended leverage." This is because it often fails to address the underlying drivers of conflict and can instead be counterproductive, triggering the violent repression of peaceful civil society actors, exacerbating impunity among military actors and exacerbating military-backed violence and conflict, and corruption (Ibid.).

It should be noted that during its EU Presidency and beyond, Germany has also supported initiatives that are welcomed by feminist civil society. Under the German EU Presidency, for example, the *European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management* was opened in Berlin in September 2020. The Centre will be responsible for election observation, monitoring of peace agreements and the development of police, justice, and democratic institutions in post-conflict settings. However, these efforts are undermined and overshadowed by the government's efforts to strengthen PESCO and the EPF or by its resistance to international disarmament and arms control efforts.

4.2.2. GERMANY'S NON-PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP IN THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL

From January 2019 to December 2020, Germany was a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the sixth time. During this time, the government chose to prioritise crises in Libya, Syria, and Sudan, the climate crisis, peace, disarmament, non-proliferation, and UNSC Resolution 1325 (otherwise known as the "*Women, Peace and Security Agenda*" (WPS)) (Auswärtiges Amt, 2020c). Although the German government has, over the last years, been increasingly willing to invest political and human resources to advance the WPS agenda nationally and internationally, it does not pursue an explicit peace policy (Bündnis 1325, 2021:4). From a feminist perspective, this should be at the core of any implementation of the WPS agenda.

During Germany's membership of the UNSC, the German chairmanship introduced Resolution 2467. This resolution addressed sexualised violence as a weapon in conflict and improved the protection of survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV). While it is undoubtedly vital to support CRSV survivors, it should be noted that the majority of the ten WPS resolutions adopted so far have placed the majority of their focus on the Protection Pillar (ultimately neglecting Participation[3], Prevention, and Relief and Recovery.) The lack of attention paid to the Prevention Pillar in particular is notable. Indeed, in the 2015 Global Study on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, the UN Secretary General notes, "international actors have increasingly shifted their attention and resources toward militarised approaches to security, resolution of disputes, and the hurried and ad hoc protection of civilians in conflict. This is not the 'prevention' envisioned 15 years ago" (2015:194). This trend risks reinforcing the notion that war needs to be 'made safe' for women and that women are in need of (militarised) protection (Shepherd, 2016). Furthermore, while Resolution 2467 explicitly refers to the *Arms Trade Treaty* (ATT) (the first international treaty to recognise the link between gender-based

violence (GBV) and the international arms trade) and acknowledges that the illicit trade of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) can exacerbate GBV, the resolution does not call upon states to prioritise disarmament, to address harmful gender stereotypes (such as militarised masculinities), to strengthen non-violent conflict resolution, or to eradicate economic and social injustice. Germany therefore missed an important opportunity to demilitarise the WPS agenda and to drive the development of the Prevention Pillar forward. Indeed, although Resolution 2467 explicitly recognised the link between arms and GBV, Germany itself has failed to streamline efforts for arms export control and disarmament through its foreign policy and multilateral engagement (and includes no mention of any commitment to disarmament or more restrictive arms control in its latest National Action Plan on WPS).

From a feminist perspective, Germany's goal of obtaining a permanent seat on the Security Council must also be critically evaluated. Feminist scholars and activists have repeatedly argued that it is necessary to reform and decenter the UNSC to achieve world peace, mainly because of the great power imbalance that exists between permanent members and elected members (Acheson & Rees, 2021, p. 54). All five permanent members are major military powers with nuclear arsenals that consistently undermine alternatives to militarised action (Ibid.). It seems unlikely that Germany, as the fourth largest exporter of arms worldwide with distinct support for the concept of nuclear deterrence, will be able to inspire positive change in the UNSC. It is more conceivable, on the other hand, that with a permanent seat in the UNSC, Germany would instead benefit from the power associated with its membership in the same way. Instead of pursuing their own seat within the UN Security Council, Germany should advocate for democratic reform within the UN and for the implementation of Article 26 of the UN Charta – which requires the Security Council to regulate armament to maintain international peace and security.

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3   While important WPS resolutions address the participation of women, they tend to focus on women's participation in peace negotiations, neglecting to foster women's participation in political and economic processes more generally.

(5)

Policy Recommendations

A feminist understanding of security and peace requires the demilitarisation of foreign policy in order to uphold human rights, social justice, and gender equality. We thus recommend that the next German government(s) take the following action:

5.1 Short-term recommendations:

5.1.1. FOCUS (POLITICALLY AND FINANCIALLY) ON A FEMINIST UNDERSTANDING OF SECURITY

- In cooperation with feminist civil society at home and abroad, initiate an inclusive process of drafting a new national strategy for peace and security, which is based on a feminist understanding of security and recognises structural inequalities as key drivers of violence and conflict.

- In policy documents and official statements, challenge the theory of nuclear and conventional deterrence and work within NATO to reject the theory of nuclear deterrence. Advocate within the Nuclear Planning Group to advocate for nuclear disarmament and remind the nuclear-armed states to honour their commitments to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

- Start redirecting financial and human resources from the budget of the Ministry of Defence to initiatives that actually contribute to making people more secure: addressing the climate crisis, strengthening global health policies, and above all, non-violent approaches to prevent and transform violent conflict, including disarmament and arms control.

- Adopt a comprehensive conflict prevention approach that aims to transform gender relations; challenging, transforming, and eliminating violent militarised power relations and militarisation; ensuring sustainable equitable social and economic development, and promoting restorative justice (Kapur and Rees, 2019).

- Replace the 2019 Concept Peace Mediation (*Konzept Friedensmediation*) with one that incorporates a feminist analysis.

5.1.2. PRIORITISE DISARMAMENT AND TRULY RESTRICTIVE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL

- In line with the Arms Trade Treaty, ensure that gender-based violence (GBV) is explicitly and mandatorily accounted for in the arms export control process. This includes introducing the risk of GBV in the Political Principles of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Export of War Weapons and Other Military Equipment as one explicit criterion that mandatorily needs to be accounted for in the arms export risk assessment (Bernarding and Lunz, 2020); and acknowledging the Arms Trade Treaty's requirement to also account for the risk that exported arms or items can facilitate GBV (Bernarding and Lunz, 2020).

- Design and implement a single harmonised and gender-sensitive law on arms export control, which replaces and encompasses the German War Weapons Export Act, the Foreign Trade Law and the Political Principles of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Export of War Weapons and Other Military Equipment (based on Bernarding et al., 2020).

- Ensure that comprehensive gender-sensitive human rights and international humanitarian law assessments are also being done for any arms or military equipment exported to EU, NATO, and NATO-equivalent countries (based on Bernarding and Lunz, 2020).

- End the export of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and corresponding ammunition to any country, recognising that SALW are often "weapons of choice" in cases of gender-based violence (based on CFFP et al, 2020).

- Continuously raise awareness of the catastrophic humanitarian and ecological consequences of nuclear accidents and attacks in multilateral fora, including in meetings of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) (based on Bernarding et al, 2020).

- Integrate commitments to disarmament and arms (export) control into national guidelines and action plans, in particular into the Federal Government's Action Plan for the Women, Peace and Security Agenda as a crucial aspect of conflict prevention and the Leitlinien der Bundesregierung: Krisen verhindern, Konflikte bewältigen, Frieden fördern (Guidelines of the Federal Government for Preventing Crises, Managing Conflicts, and Promoting Peace).

- Encourage German pension funds and financial institutions to divest from nuclear weapon producing companies (based on Bernarding et al., 2020).

- End nuclear hosting and sharing, and disallow nuclear weapons to be stationed in Germany. Advocate for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone in Europe.

- Assume observer status at the first meeting of TPNW states parties, which will take place at the UN Office in Vienna from 22 to 24 March 2022.

- Publicly support an international legally binding treaty on the prohibition of fully autonomous weapons.

5.1.3. REVERSE THE MILITARISATION OF THE HUMANITARIAN SPACE

- End cooperation, funding, and (military) support for border externalisation initiatives in general and in particular with repressive governments, such as Libya, Tunisia, Egypt, and Sudan.

- Advocate for thorough investigations of human rights violations, such as pushbacks, committed by national and EU border agencies (such as Frontex).

- Advocate for safe and legal migration routes and address discriminatory and violent practices entrenched in surveillance technologies and border control.

- End support for and participation in militarised NATO maritime operations in the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea.

- Implement control mechanisms to prevent and stop the German arms industry's involvement in militarising the EU's external borders.

- Convert militaristic "stabilising operations" into real peace-building missions supported by sufficient humanitarian aid, development cooperation projects, the promotion of human rights and assistance in strengthening democracy (Rosa-Luxemburg Stiftung, 2021).

5.1.4. DESIGN INCLUSIVE AND DEMOCRATIC DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES TO SHAPE PEACE AND SECURITY POLICIES

- Ensure that national standards counter inappropriate influence on German bilateral and international deals and activities (Transparency International, 2020)

- Devise stricter conflict of interest and "cooling-off" regulations for government and military staff (Ibid.)

- Require consultants and other MoD contractors to implement robust internal information barriers to prevent conflicts of interest between clients (Ibid.)

- Introduce a permanent government outsourcing review board to verify the necessity of external consultancy services (Ibid.).

- Ensure that (civil society) organisations advocating for a feminist understanding of security, disarmament, and arms control are considered as important stakeholders that need to be involved in peace and security decision-making (CFFP, forthcoming).

- Implement and strengthen feminist funding practices to ensure civil society is enabled to meaningfully shape political processes: This includes long-term, core and institutional funding which is easy-to-administer and accessible to activists and movements that aim at driving social, political, legal and cultural change (AWID and Mama Cash, 2020; Gunther and Srivastava, no date).

- Fund independent research on the extent to which militarisation and militarism affects German policy areas not covered by this brief, such as diplomacy or domestic policy areas.

5.1.5. FOSTER A FEMINIST UNDERSTANDING OF SECURITY WITHIN THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

- Strengthen and encourage confidence- and trust-building measures and cooperation with all States, including those who are not part of Germany's *Bündnispartnerschaft* yet.

- Promote the EU's role as a peace project and cooperate with other EU member states in turning it into a global mediator and peacebuilder.

- Cooperate with other UN member states to democratise all decision-making processes concerning international peace and security, and promote the transparency of the UN.

- Ensure that UNSC Resolution 1325 and its related resolutions are fully implemented locally and globally. This in particular includes strengthening the Prevention Pillar of the agenda.

- Strengthen the European Centre of Excellence for Civilian Crisis Management based in Berlin.

- Ensure a gender-sensitive implementation of the European Mediation Strategy published by European External Action Service (EEAS).

5.2 Long-term recommendations:

5.2.1. FOCUS (POLITICALLY AND FINANCIALLY) ON A FEMINIST UNDERSTANDING OF SECURITY

- Replace the Ministry of Defence with a Ministry for Peace.

5.2.2. PRIORITISE DISARMAMENT AND TRULY RESTRICTIVE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL

- Advocate among EU member states for a sanctioning mechanism for non-compliance with the EU Common Position, and coherent interpretation of its eight criteria (Besch and Oppenheim, 2019)

- Design and implement a policy for the end of German exports of arms, military equipment, technology, know-how, and support to subsidiary companies, with clear timelines and milestones (Bernarding et al., 2020).

- Take up an international leadership role in advocating for an end to arms production and exports (in the EU and beyond). This includes highlighting the interlinkages between the international arms trade, militarism, GBV, human rights violations, and gender inequality in statements and speeches (Ibid).

- Ensure Germany takes full responsibility to survivors of gender-based violence and violence facilitated by German arms exported to other countries, both in peace and wartime. This includes financial support to survivors of intimate partner violence in non-conflict settings (Ibid.).

- Within the EU, advocate for the development of a European-wide strategy to reduce the economic dependency of national economies on the arms industry, with a clear goal of ending the production and exporting of arms in the medium-term (Bernarding and Lunz, 2020).

- Accede to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and encourage allied countries to ratify the treaty as well.

- Clearly dissociate from NATO's concept of nuclear deterrence and its current nuclear doctrine and encourage other NATO members to follow suit.

5.2.3. FOSTER A FEMINIST UNDERSTANDING OF SECURITY WITHIN THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM

- Advocate for an end of the European Peace Facility.

- Advocate to shift funds from defence and military security to conflict prevention and non-violent conflict resolution funding, including becoming a mediation actor.

- Advocate to re-frame the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy into the EU as a peace-project aiming for a decolonising security approach and participate in maintenance of global peace.

- Advocate for the demilitarisation of the WPS Agenda and its full implementation.

- Advocate for the appointment of an EU Special Representative for Peace, as suggested by the European Parliament (2019)

- Instead of investing political capital in advocating for a permanent seat within the UN Security Council, encourage the implementation of the recommendations outlined by Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (2018) in "Towards a Feminist Security Council", including

  - Strengthening partnerships with women and feminist civil society;
  - supporting local, national and regional leadership;
  - Prioritise gender-sensitive conflict analysis;
  - ensuring action on disarmament;
  - promoting transparent and democratic governance.

Conclusion

As the findings of this policy brief have demonstrated, the impact of militarisation on German foreign policy goes far beyond rising military expenditure and the procurement of arms. Indeed, following a deeper analysis, we can conclude that militarisation has pervaded every area of Germany's external action, influencing the government's funding priorities, decision-making processes, institutional structure, and multilateral engagement. The result is a cycle of policy-making that is not only dangerous but is fundamentally contradictory to German public interest. Crucially, by failing to de-centre the well-being of the state in international security conversations, Germany is unable to recognise the human impact of militarised action. The government has therefore not only refused to take responsibility for the circumstances of those made vulnerable by militarised border control, the exporting of arms, and the existence of nuclear weapons in the international system but has also actively obstructed the path towards efforts that would demilitarise the international system, such as international disarmament initiatives. Germany must abandon its militarised, state-centric conception of security in favour of approaches capable of addressing the root causes of conflict, eradicating inequality, and fostering inclusive and sustainable peace. The authors hope that the recommendations included in this briefing provide sufficient guidance for the first steps that can be taken by the government in this regard.

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