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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If Australia's security in the 21st Century is to be secured, the Australian Government must adopt a foreign policy commitment to friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all countries, particularly with non-aligned and independent nations. This must be combined with an independent and non-aligned defence policy which should be efficient, affordable and genuinely serve the defence needs of our country and the need for peace and stability in our region.

Australia can maintain its current aggressive "defence" philosophy, using its military strength for economic and diplomatic leverage, pursuing the high technology path with reliance on the United States for advanced systems and logistics support, supporting US military interventions overseas, increasing the militarisation of our society, and pushing the arms trade with a consequent rise in poverty, insecurity and conflict.

Alternatively, we can rethink and reform the security agenda, develop positive relationships with regional states, reassess the weapons systems required to satisfy our security interests, develop conversion programs, and support and increase aid to our regional neighbours to address their human security needs.

Australia should have enough military power to defend our territory against likely threats. However, we do not need and should not acquire weapon systems or a military doctrine which can threaten the territory of other states.

All this is possible within the current strategic environment. Australia faces the least strategic challenge from the rise of China compared with any other East Asian country. Strategic and defence studies expert Paul Dibb has dismissed alarmist interpretations of China's growing military power, describing the Chinese navy as a 'paper tiger' and warning Australians not to 'frighten ourselves to death by drumming up the next military threat to Australia and basing our defence policy on the likelihood that we are going to be attacked by China'.

Similarly unfounded fears exist about the rise of Indonesia with 54 per cent of Australians concerned that it will emerge as a military threat. In reality, Australia's excessive defence spending is three times greater than Indonesia's. Our determination to retain air and naval superiority over the Indonesian National Armed Forces, disproportionate closeness to the US, and militarisation of civilian matters such as the Customs and Border Protection Service all work to solidify Australian-Indonesian suspicions and misunderstandings.

Australians' security concerns reflect historically and culturally embedded fear of Asia and a belief that we need a 'great and powerful friend' to protect us. These irrational fears persist in

large part because governments have failed to ensure open, informed comprehensive public and parliamentary debate about our strategic needs and the implications of our alliance with the US.

The Federal Government must be transparent about and make itself accountable for its decisions to pursue ever deeper integration with US military policy and activities.

A reformed security approach should see Australia asserting its military independence from the US, including breaking the US military alliance, removing the US military bases from our soil, developing confidence building processes in our region, reducing the military budget, rigorously controlling the arms trade, and converting military bases and production facilities to peaceful purposes.

NATIONAL SECURITY

There is a need for a radical rethink of both security and industrial policies based on broader concepts of sustainable security and disarmament that encompass environmental, social and economic dimensions such as global warming, where Australia could make a major contribution to a new political economy of common security. This would require significant restructuring of the armed forces and the military-industrial base, in addition to alternative security policies, arms conversion and effective controls on the arms trade.

In the early 1980s, the United Nations Commission on Disarmament and Security Issues argued that the military basis of relations between countries was increasingly irrelevant in a world that faced a series of growing economic and social crises. What was needed was a new common security approach that prioritised international development issues. The Commission called for a graduated program of cuts in nuclear and conventional forces leading to general and complete disarmament as a longer-term but achievable objective.

Security is often interpreted to mean military security — the capacity to identify and meet perceived threats to a nation by military means, by the use or the threat of the use of force.

However, security is multi-dimensional and it cannot be enforced by ever greater numbers of more sophisticated weapons. It is widely known that real and enduring security comes with jobs, steady food supplies, homes, clean water, warmth, education, health care, and democracy, all which are fundamental human rights.

Solving issues of unemployment, poverty, homelessness, pollution of our environment and other problems in our community is necessary for Australia's security. Excessive and inappropriate military spending siphons off the resources needed for their solution.

US ALLIANCE

Australia's close friendship with the United States is valuable and should be fostered. Our military relationship perverts this friendship — it is unequal to the point of being oppressive for Australia, undermining our sovereignty and our regional relationships. It weds us to the US military posture of aggression, to US policies of pre-emptive invasion, and the weaponisation of space.

While ever Australia lends bases, ports and infrastructure for the United States nuclear war fighting apparatus, it is also lending weight to the lie that nuclear weapons bring security. In particular, Australia's integration with US missile defence programs makes us complicit in what is arguably the most destabilising of US ambitions: the acquisition of a first-strike capacity. In

our own security interests, and those of the globe, Australia should discontinue hosting US military facilities and extract itself from its deep technological and force integration with the US.

The US-Australia military alliance distorts our society. Instead of a focus on sustainable development, socially useful production and the needs of the community, priority is given to supporting US foreign policy, military spending and increasingly repressive social control. The beneficiaries are not our citizens but the US and Australian militaries together with huge US corporations and some Australian companies.

Whereas the wider public conceives of the alliance as a means to strengthen Australia's security, in elite policy developing circles it is primarily about securing Australia's status as a 'middle power' and an 'Asia-Pacific power'. Policy makers see Australia's alliance-driven military power as a means to lever Australian influence, resulting in the militarisation of our diplomacy and international relations.

Instead of a military alliance with the United States, Australia needs friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all countries. Militarising Australia and delivering unfaltering support for US aggression and threat to use force against other countries cannot ensure security for Australians.

Although the rise of China has added new impetus to calls for the United States to sustain its military engagement in the region, US regional hegemony has long been justified as necessary to keep the peace in Asia. The conventional wisdom amongst strategic studies experts is that US geopolitical primacy serves to maintain the 'balance' in East Asia by capping Japanese militarism, balancing Chinese power and deterring North Korea. A particular favourite is to equate stability and the 'balance of power' with the prevailing distribution of power or the status quo; an interpretation that conveniently translates into support for US hegemony.

In reality, US hegemony is incompatible with the emergence of a peaceful and stable Asia. American strategic involvement in the region is fundamentally designed to keep East Asia divided.

America's asymmetric, bi-lateral hub-and-spokes system of alliances in Asia was established precisely to prevent regional integration and independence. This geo-strategy was perhaps best summed up by former US national security advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski who articulated it as the need 'to prevent collusion and maintain security dependence among the vassals, to keep tributaries pliant and protected, and to keep the barbarians from coming together.'

Obama's pivot to Asia extends this strategy. By reasserting its military presence and strengthening its alliance relationships in Asia, the US aims not only to constrain the rise of China but also to thwart any accommodation with Beijing that could lead to the emergence of a regional grouping independent of US leadership.

Although Australian officials cite polls that consistently show high levels of public support for the alliance, they invariably neglect to mention that the same surveys also frequently demonstrate most Australians desire a more independent foreign policy from the United States. Key foreign policy decisions made on the pretext that they are necessitated by the alliance or strengthen the alliance, as in recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the 2004 Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement (AUSFTA), have all been deeply unpopular.

Despite its alliance obligations, 76 per cent of the public believe Australia should only support US military action if it is authorised by the United Nations and less than half (48 per cent) believe Australia should join the US in a new war in the Middle East. While the majority (61 per cent) of Australians are in favour of basing US forces in Australia, only 38 per cent believe

Australia should support US military action in Asia in a conflict, for example, between China and Japan. Were the full implications of the bases widely understood, including the fact that they could implicate Australia in any US war with China, a considerable reduction in support is conceivable.

CHINA

Although signifying a significant regional shift in geopolitical power, the rise of China poses little threat to US national security. This fundamental strategic reality is underpinned by the vast military gap between China and the US. In 2013, the US officially spent \$600 billion on defence, almost as much as the next 14 countries combined and over five times as much as China. Moreover, US strength is complemented by allies who surround China — Japan, South Korea and Taiwan — and a global network of military bases.

It is also pertinent that China requires substantial military resources to be employed for internal security and to protect against bordering rival powers. The US, on the other hand, with weak neighbours and vast ocean barriers, is able to focus outwards, possessing and exercising overwhelming force projection capabilities. America maintains over 1,000 foreign military facilities (China has none), has elite forces deployed to 134 countries, and annually conducts 170 military exercises and 250 port visits in the Asia-Pacific region alone.

In certain ways, China's defence strategy mimics Australia's own. The latest Defence White Paper (2013) reiterates this long-held defence priority for Australia: 'Controlling the sea and air approaches to our continent is the key to defending Australia, in order to deny them to an adversary and provide the maximum freedom of action for our forces.' Recognising the similarities, Andrew Davies and Mark Thompson of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute write that China's strategy to protect its air and maritime approaches is 'as fundamental to China's self-defence as it is to ours...' In contrast', they add, 'US interests in the region are neither immutable nor fundamental to US security.'

China's military assertiveness is particularly worrisome for the prospects of a just and peaceful resolution to the conflicts in the East China and South China Seas. There are, however, no innocent parties in the disputes. All claimant states in the multiple disputes (China, Japan, Vietnam, Taiwan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Brunei) have been provocative at one time or another, while territorial claims by the Philippines (pre-2009) and Malaysia are as spurious and weak as China's.

The common refrain is that US military domination over these waters is necessary to maintain peace, uphold international law and protect freedom of navigation in the event that a hostile China disrupts or blocks regional and international trade. The unstated flipside of this equation is that America's foot remains on China's throat, able at any time to choke off the resources and products necessary for Chinese industry and ultimately the People's Republic of China's survival. Although there is a mutually beneficial economic relationship between the two countries, should conflict develop US war plans involve contingencies for blockading China.

In other words, as former Australian foreign minister Gareth Evans made clear, America's primary motivation is not to protect freedom of navigation which it regularly 'talks up', but rather 'its overwhelming preoccupation... with the right to engage in military surveillance unhindered, as close inshore as it can' to China. It is this 'overwhelming preoccupation' that has led to a number of clashes between the US and Chinese aircraft and naval vessels in the South China Sea since 2001.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Australia should reform our military strategy to be relevant to our regional context. This requires that Australia works to build positive rather than negative relationships with our neighbours and seeks security within rather than from, or over, other nations in the region.

Conflicts in the region are predominantly internal. They are not directed against Australia and they cannot be solved by military means.

With growing arms transfers and large military budgets in many of the region's countries, Asia and the Pacific have become increasingly militarised. There has been a growing tendency for states to rely on the accumulation of weaponry and threat or use of force as the primary instrument in matters of external security and to secure domestic social order.

Australia has assisted in these processes by its own military build-up, increasing arms sales to the region and by the militarisation of its foreign policy.

Some analysts suggest that Australia must consider the kind of military capabilities it will need in 2030 with the rise of China and India. But why should we see the rise of these two nations as anything but benign?

Australia cannot afford a continued cold war paradigm which defines regional engagement as interoperability with the United States in potential high intensity conflicts.

It is 'cold war' thinking that is propelling us along the path of ongoing expansion of strategic strike and force projection capabilities, maintaining a 'knowledge edge' over regional states and remaining a substantial maritime power. Australia simply cannot afford such an approach, not economically, not socially and certainly not strategically.

Overseas aid and other support measures can assist recipients to cope better with their conflict-inducing social and economic problems. Overseas aid is a cost effective means of contributing to reducing the problems of people in our region, yet Australia's contribution is minute compared to its defence spending. This year's budget cut to ODA, amounting to \$7.6 billion over 5 years, is a sad failure of Australia's commitment to the UN Millennium Development Goals and to the bipartisan undertaking to raise aid spending to 0.5% of GNI by 2017-18.

Australia's disproportionate embrace of military power has been made starkly obvious by its neglect of the Ebola crisis in West Africa. The Abbott Government is spending at least \$0.5 billion yearly on a far-off military operation that is at best symbolic, at worst lethally counterproductive, yet it is deaf to the pleas for effective on-ground help from poor nations facing a devastating medical emergency, an emergency, what's more, that threatens global security.

The Australian Government should support the elimination or substantial reduction of the foreign debt burden of poorer nations.

Australian trade, co-operation in the development of science and medicine, educational and cultural exchanges should be expanded on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

Australia's economic well-being, security and national independence require a foreign policy which upholds peace and supports disarmament and is based on the principles of peaceful co-existence of states with differing social systems.

ECONOMIC QUESTIONS

Total Australian defence funding for 2014-15 is \$29.3 billion, an increase on the previous year of \$2.3 billion. Defence spending now equates to 1.8 per cent of government outlays and is proposed to increase to 2 per cent within the decade. No civilian sector enjoys equivalent budget generosity, in fact most suffered cuts.

Military spending reduces public and private investment, diverts funds and people from civilian research and development, and holds back economic development.

The World Bank has reported that: "*evidence increasingly points to high military spending as contributing to fiscal and debt crises, and negatively affecting economic growth and development*". (World Development Report, 1988, pp106-7)

Government decisions to purchase expensive weapons systems have generated pressures to boost exports of military goods and services. It is argued that defence exports help to sustain national defence efforts and, by extending production runs, to cut the costs of defence equipment for national use.

Military investment is promoted because it is claimed it provides Australia with internationally successful, high technology niches in aerospace, engineering and electronics, as well as skilled jobs and spin-offs beneficial to the civil sector.

However, Australia's current military industry policy is fundamentally unsustainable. Imported military hardware costs Australia billions of dollars annually. The real cost has been the diversion of resources from other forms of manufacturing activity that, if the government had shown a similar long-term investment commitment, could have generated greater employment and direct benefits to the civil economy through improved technologies and industrial processes.

Increasing Australia's military spending inevitably conveys a more threatening posture in our region. Australia's military expansion will create unease in some other countries, encouraging them to devote even more of their wealth to their own military capabilities.

The government needs to pay far more serious consideration to the adverse impact of the arms trade, such as exacerbating regional tensions; propping up authoritarian and anti-democratic regimes; the corruption that surrounds these deals; and increasing poverty through the opportunity costs to countries, particularly developing countries, of prioritising military expenditure against the pressing needs for other social and welfare spending.

FOREIGN MILITARY FACILITIES ON AUSTRALIAN SOIL

The 30 or more US-controlled military facilities on our soil are part of the US network of 1,000 bases maintained around the world. These underpin US policies including preventive and pre-emptive unilateral military action, spreading democracy abroad at the point of a gun, and obstructing the rise of any "near-peer" country or bloc of countries that might challenge US military supremacy.

The military facilities in Australia supply intelligence and communications for United States invasions, they spy on our neighbours and allies, and they provide training areas for Australian soldiers to practice fighting under United States military command.

They are integral to the United States nuclear war-fighting machine in terms of satellite communications, targeting, planning and training for the use of nuclear weapons.

Intelligence — reliable information — is essential for every state's security. However, the collection of intelligence needed by Australia comes a poor second to US needs because of

agreements between the two countries. The US controls what intelligence is collected and where it is distributed.

It is a matter of deep concern that US military facilities around the world have spied on their host countries for economic, political or industrial advantage. Australia does not know what political, diplomatic and economic communications have been intercepted by Pine Gap and some of the other US military facilities on Australian soil. However, through its 'full knowledge and concurrence' agreement with the US, Australia makes itself complicit in all base activities.

These bases increase the hold of the United States over Australian foreign policy and undermine our independence and sovereignty.

US military bases destroy Australia's security by making our country a target for nuclear and terrorist attacks.

The facilities should be relocated to their country of origin and, where possible, the land returned to its original Aboriginal owners.

Around the world, US bases have become the centre of major social problems. Australia is no exception. An Anglican Church report from Hobart details frequent sexual assaults on young men and women by US service people. US military police assaulted Aborigines in Ipswich during 1997 war games and two US servicemen were tried for rape in Darwin in February 2004.

The bases pose major dangers to our environment, including unique habitats and endangered species, from effects on air quality, fire potential, noise, electromagnetic pollution, waste disposal and spills, erosion from military movements, and chemical contamination from bombing, weapons firing and repair and maintenance programs.

The significance of specific bases is perhaps less important than the overall increase in military and intelligence co-operation over the last decade, including the announcement of new 'joint facilities' or increased US access to existing facilities in Australia. Given Defence's lack of transparency, the following list of recent expansions is unlikely to be exhaustive:

- significant expansion of the Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap;
- permanent, rotational basing of a US Marine Task Force in Darwin;
- increased US use of the ADF's North Australian Range Complex (Bradshaw, Mt Bunday and Delamere);
- establishment of a Joint/Combined Training Centre electronically linking the ADF's northern bases to the US Pacific Command's Warfighting Center;
- no less than 3 new ground satellite stations at Kojarena, one serving the US Navy's MUOS program, the other 2 serving the US Air Force's Wideband Global SATCOM system (WGS);
- two WGS installation in eastern Australia, one at HMAS Harman, the other at Army Recruit Training Centre Kapooka;
- greater Australian Signals Directorate integration with US intelligence agencies – e.g. ASD/NSA bases now include not only the long-time '5-Eyes' base at Kojarena, but centres at Pine Gap, Shoal Bay Receiving Station (Darwin) and HMAS Harman (ACT);
- 3 new optical telescopes for the USAF's Ext-HAND program at Learmouth Solar Observatory;

- increased US presence at the Harold E. Holt Naval Communication Station (HEH), including a \$30 million C-band space-surveillance radar, to be complemented by a Lockheed Martin 'space object tracking site' combining laser and optical technology;
- a powerful DARPA Space Surveillance Telescope, also to be located at HEH.

Along with the deepening integration of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) with US armed forces and policy changes undertaken at the strategic level, the result, according to Professor Richard Tanter, (Senior Research Associate, Nautilus Institute) 'may well be, from a Chinese perspective, that Australia is not so much hosting US military bases, but is becoming a virtual American base in its own right.'

Although successive Australian governments have continually insisted that Australia hosts no US bases, only 'joint-facilities', the level of co-operation is in fact, as Professor Tanter points out, 'fundamentally and inherently asymmetrical'. While there are varying degrees of 'jointness' involved in the US military and intelligence presence across Australia, certainly Pine Gap and the Naval Communication Station Harold E Holt are primarily US bases with a limited Australian role.

The disclosures by National Security Agency (NSA) whistle blower Edward Snowden cast new light on Australia's deep integration with US global and regional military strategy. In addition to revelations about Australia's vast intelligence gathering responsibilities to intercept phone calls and data across Asia as part of the US-led global spying network, the extent of Australia's direct participation in US global military operations through the Pine Gap defence facility was also revealed,

The facility has played a major role in illegal US drone strike assassinations in Afghanistan and Iraq by tracking the precise geo-location of suspects to be targeted and passing on that intelligence to the US military. The facility has become so important to the American military over the last ten years, and especially the last three years, that according to one Australian intelligence official the 'US will never fight another war in the eastern hemisphere without the direct involvement of Pine Gap'.

The joint Australian-American facilities have long been integral to any potential American operations in the Asia-Pacific region and have therefore presented themselves as targets to an adversary of the US for quite some time. Moreover, as Davies and Schreer of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute make clear, an enhanced American naval presence in Australia as part of Obama's pivot strategy raises the distinct possibility of directly implicating Australia in a US blockade of China.

MILITARY EXERCISES

Armed forces need to exercise. However, Australia's participation in war games is less for Australian interests than for those of the United States.

The Department of Defence gives priority to exercises which develop "seamless interoperability". Interoperability means Australians training with the US military, learning to take orders from the US command and to do things the way the US military does; it means the *de facto* incorporation of the ADF into the US military.

Joint military exercises, such as the Talisman Sabre series, are training grounds for United States invasions like the onslaught on Iraq. Scenarios for future aggression are worked out and practiced during such war games.

US Department of Defence facilities and exercises have left a toxic legacy worldwide. It has been estimated that the US military generates 750,000 tons of toxic waste material annually, more than the five largest chemical companies in the US combined.

Since 9/11, the US military has sought to exempt itself from **all** key US environmental laws. This complete disregard for environmental stewardship does not offer Australians any peace of mind when inviting the US military into our country and our sensitive natural environment.

INAPPROPRIATE PROCUREMENTS

Major weapons systems that Australia purchases are designed to fight wars on foreign soil in co-operation with the United States. This increases the Australian defence budget and skews strategic choices away from the defence and security of the Australian people and continent.

The Navy plays a significant role in the protection of our country due to our Island status. External threats to Australia are largely small scale such as poachers and 'people smugglers'. Yet the most recent major item purchased by the Navy has been the Collins class submarines (4 of which have been upgraded to be compatible with the US Navy) which are extremely costly but of little use against small surface boats.

To be operationally effective, Australian ANZAC frigates, cruisers and destroyers need to be part of a battle group based around an aircraft carrier. As Australia neither has nor needs an aircraft carrier, these ships are dependent on deployment with US aircraft carriers. Such deployments serve US war-fighting interests but they do nothing for Australia's security.

The purchase of FA-18s by the Australian Air Force was another decision made with an eye to foreign aggression in coalition with the USA.

The prospect of Australia buying bombers to replace the F-111s reflects the dominance of those interests who want Australia to continue to be the US deputy sheriff in the region. As for the F-35, it seems generally agreed to be more an offensive than defensive weapon. According to ASPI, (March 2014, "Taking wing: it's time to decide on the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter"), the aircraft is not necessary for the defence of Australian sovereign territory but is necessary for Australia to be able to "penetrate sophisticated air defences" and to be a frontline contributor in the initial stages of a US-led coalition air attack.

The better alternative would be planes with a range of less than 2,000 kms, which can operate in remote areas, using basic airfields and maintenance. These planes would be genuinely defensive rather than offensive, and would help wind down an arms race in the region.

Billions have been spent on army equipment, but the basic needs of soldiers and their families have not been adequately met. Behind this problem lies the reliance on high-tech weapons, which are extremely expensive.

A RATIONAL ALTERNATIVE

To move towards a peaceful and just solution of the threats facing Australia's security, Australia needs to move in the following directions:

- A change in Australia's defence policy and military capability to one of defence of our own territory.
- A reduction in the military budget. Conversion of military-related industries to socially useful and environmentally sustainable production with the consequent creation of additional employment opportunities must be planned for and implemented. In light of the loss of

- A strict policy of non-involvement in the production, testing or deployment of any components of nuclear, space, biological, chemical or any other type of mass-destruction weapons.
- An end to the supply of military equipment and the provision of military training to or joint military exercises with repressive regimes in the region.
- An end to the hosting of US military-related bases on Australian soil and the termination of the ANZUS Treaty. Adoption by the Australian government of an independent foreign policy.
- Legislation to allow trade unions within the armed services.
- The compulsory adoption of appropriate peace education syllabuses in all primary and secondary schools, both State and private. Children should be taught tolerance and respect for other cultures and races and for the environment, and also that love of country, religion and politics should not be used as an excuse for violence and aggressive behaviour.
- No overseas deployments of Australian armed forces unless endorsed, following public debate, by both houses of Parliament and placed under the control of the United Nations.
- Work for the establishment of nuclear-free zones, including North-East Asian (in particular, de-nuclearisation of the Korean peninsula) and South-East Asian nuclear-free zones.
- Maintenance of civilian control over all overseas humanitarian and disaster relief operations.

Although Australia's security depends on the regional and world situations, the converse is also true. Australian initiatives can help to improve regional and global security.

Sources for the information in this submission include the research of Prof Richard Tanter, Senior Research Associate, Nautilus Institute; Vince Scappatura, PhD candidate at Deakin University; and Philip Dorling, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of NSW..

In particular, please see:

Vince Scappatura, The US 'Pivot to Asia,' the China Spectre and the Australian-American Alliance, *The Asia-Pacific Journal*, Vol. 11, Issue 36, No. 3, September 8, 2014.

Richard Tanter, The “Joint Facilities” revisited – Desmond Ball, democratic debate on security and the human interest, *Special Report, Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability*, 12 December 2012, at <http://nautilus.org/napsnet/napsnet-special-reports/the-joint-facilities-revisited-desmond-ball-democratic-debate-on-security-and-the-human-interest/>