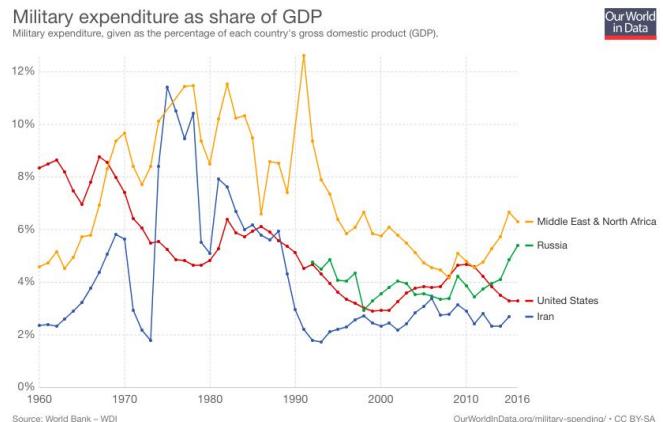


Forum:	Disarmament Committee
Issue:	The issue of increased military spending
Student Officer:	Emir Arda Değer
Position:	Deputy Chair

Introduction

"Our Military will now be stronger than ever before. We love and need our Military and gave them everything — and more. First time this has happened in a long time." These words belong to the President of the United States, Donald Trump, who has signed a bill on February 9, 2018 for increasing US's military spending at home and abroad. With the bill, President Trump has increased the military budget to \$700 billion, which is the greatest budget the Pentagon has ever seen. The main reasons of this increment are border controls and foreign threats to the homeland and to the bases in abroad. With this decision, many members of The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also decided to increase their military spending by the call of the US for focusing on the threat to the NATO posed by Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea. Particularly, France has unveiled their plans to boost military spending by more than a third until 2025.

In response to this decision by the US and the NATO alliance, as it can be seen in the figure, especially Iran, Russia, and Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries have also decided to increase their military expenditure as share of GDP in order to prevent the US and NATO to become a threat for them. In MENA, the formation of terrorist organizations and the formation of coalition forces in response to that, created dozens of conflicts since the World War II. When the coalition powers boost their military power, MENA nations also want to respond to that. Simply put, when a nation extends its military capabilities, the others that have any kinds of relations also increases its military spending for preventing any possible threats and being powerful in a possible arms race or conflict. Therefore, military spending of the related Member States increase exponentially when a nation decides to boost its military expenditures in order to set the military balance. However, such arms race due to the recent developments can lead to or deepen the political disputes between nations as it happened between China and Japan; US, Russia, and Iran.



Considering that this year's RCIMUN theme will be "Political Polarization: Fostering accord in a world of intolerance", the issue of increased military spending is also related with the theme since political polarization causes nations to take measures and increase their military spending for defending their extreme ideologies, which is happening in MENA and Latin America right now. It should be noted that according to IHS Jane's reports and CNBC, in 2018 the global defense spending will hit Cold War record, which is 1.67 trillion. In order to prevent a "new Cold War", prevent the military spending to increase than

needed in the Member States, and prevent possible arms races and conflicts as the disarmament committee, at first, we need to scrutinize the reasons of the increment in the military spending.

Definition of Key Terms

Arms race

Arms race can be defined as a rapid increase in the quality or quantity of the weapons and military power during peacetime. ("Arms Race"). The situation would create tension between two or more Member States or irregulars to become the dominant power through military and weaponry. Arms race was a characteristic of the Cold War between US and Soviet Union, which has led to a political dispute.

GDP

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a monetary measure of the market goods and services produced in a certain term. It is the broadest quantitative measure for a nation's economic activity. It includes all resources such as but not limited to land, labor, and capital. Thus, the effects of the increased military spending can be reflected on the GDP since such an increase would usually affect most resources in a negative way.

Military expenditure

Military expenditure is the amount of financial resources allocated by the government for defense purposes. This allocated budget includes the expenditures of military operations, equipments, personal, and R&D. The military expenditures can be ranked according to the spending as a percentage of GDP. Such ranking would illustrate the level of importance of defense and military compared to other internal affairs. The other type of ranking would be the military expenditures as a share of global total. This ranking would indicate how powerful each nation is in terms of military capabilities compared to others. So, while the first ranking would illustrate the importance given to the military, the second ranking would show how powerful each nation is compared to the others.

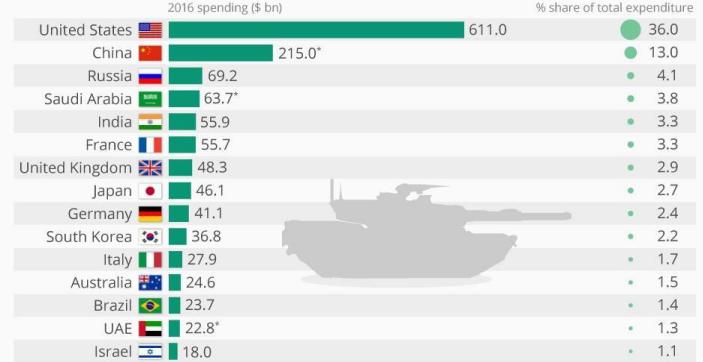
The Biggest Military Budgets As A Percentage Of GDP

Estimated military expenditure as a % of GDP in selected countries in 2014



The Top 15 Countries For Military Expenditure in 2016

2016 military expenditure by country and share of global total



Source: SIPRI

Forbes statista

* Estimate
©StatistaCharts Source: Sipri

Forbes statista

Arms trade

Arms trade refers to the global market for any product of the arms industry including small, artillery or mass destruction. Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which aims to prevent increased military spending through restricting arms trade and providing transparency in order to prevent conflicts, was ratified by 94 of the Member States. 41 of the Member States have signed it but did not ratify it. ATT further aims to minimize the importation and exportation of all weapons and set transparency.

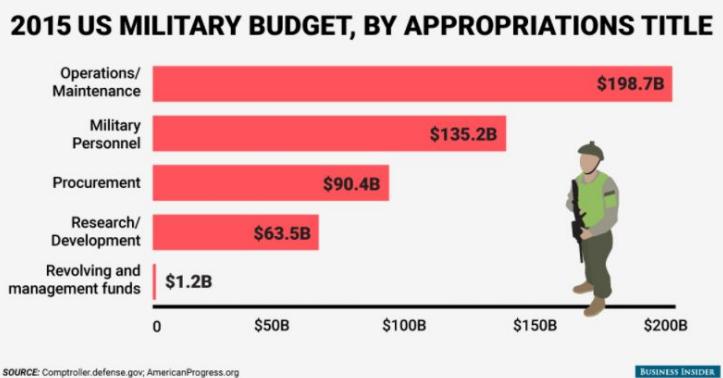


General Overview

US, China, and Russia are the leading nations in military expenditures. As it was mentioned, with the recent actions of the President Trump, the military spending of these nations along with the other NATO and MENA nations have increased. In order to understand the reasons of the increment in the military spending, at first we need to look at the distribution of the allocated military budgets of the nations.

As the nation with the highest military spending, the US uses the majority of its budget, which is approximately 41 % of the military budget, for the military operations abroad. So, we first need to look at the usage of this 41% of the budget by the Pentagon. When we look at where this allocated budget was most recently used, we can see the following:

- **Afghan War:** Dismantling al-Qaeda and removing Taliban from power.



- **Invasion of Iraq:** accusations that President Saddam Hussein was stockpiling weapons of mass destruction.
- **Yemeni Civil War:** To prevent Houthi rebels that are backed by Iran to usurp the government, and aiding the top economic partner, Saudi Arabia.
- **Libyan Civil War:** Although it is usually accepted that the reason of the US intervention was to protect civilians and free them from the dictatorship of Muammar Gaddafi, there are many additional reasons for the intervention. Gaddafi supported Palestinian Armed Groups, fueled many communist and terrorist organizations, and constructed nuclear weapon.
- **Syrian Civil War:** Syria plays a vital role in MENA for US as it has a close relationship with Russia and Iran. Also, it is a link in the connection between the Lebanese Shiite movement of Hezbollah Lebanon and Iran. In addition to that, Syria has fought several wars with Israel, US's top regional ally.

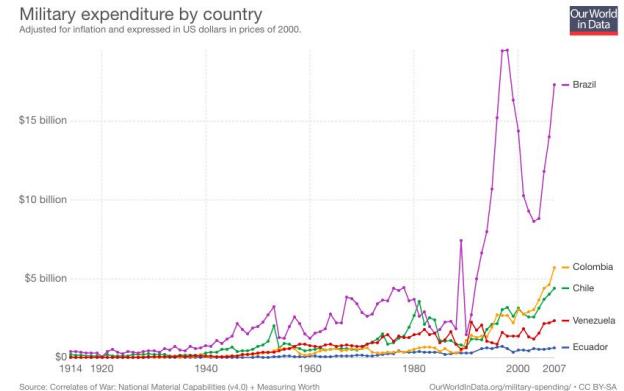
This shows that the main usage reason of the allocated military budget is to preserve political power and economic gains. In all interventions by the US, there is an aim to prevent another party that has opposite ideologies to gain power that can threaten the state and its people. In response to these actions, the party with the opposite ideology also increases its military spending in order to respond to the situation in order to defend itself and stay powerful. Therefore, we can state that the first reason of the increased military spending is:

1. Maintenance and Preserving economic and political power

In addition to the United States, many other Member States also increase their military spending to preserve their economic and political power. This maintenance does not always be a precaution abroad as the US, it can also come out as increased military spending for precautions against the threats within the nation. Latin American and MENA nations are the exemplars for this kind of increased military spending.

As it was mentioned previously, due to the formation of terrorist organizations and due to the increased foreign intervention, most MENA countries have felt the need to increase their military spending by cutting down the social spending since the economic situations of the most nations in the region are not sufficient enough to increase military spending without cut downs.

In Latin America, due to the increased numbers of guerilla forces and terrorist organizations that are rebelling against the government by the acts of terrorism, the military spending in the last years increased drastically as the graph shows. Specifically, the spending were increased in the regions that are threatened more by the guerilla and militia forces as Colombia, Venezuela, Chile, and Brazil. Excluding Brazil, the economic situations of the rest of the Member States were not sufficient enough to increase military spending without cut downs as the MENA nations. Therefore, the aforementioned nations also experienced cut downs in social spending.



Considering such situations in especially MENA and Latin America, we can state that the second reason for increased military spending is:

2. Preventing the formation of new militia and guerilla forces, and fighting against the existing ones to ensure the continuation of the government and the nation

This reason can be classified in a superset called “internal security”. In this case, we also need to add another factor to the increased military spending due to the internal security, which can

be border controls. In the recent years, the budget allocated to the border controls has increased drastically especially in US and Europe. In Europe, due to the recent conflicts in the Middle East, and the consequent increase in the numbers of immigrants and refugees, European Union members have decided to increase budget allocated for the border security to 19 billion dollars, and US has constantly increased their allocated budget although it was not too high compared to the spending of Europe as the peak was 4 billion dollars. However, with the election of President Trump, The White House has recently prepared a bill for allocating 23 billion dollars to the border security, especially for the southern border. This amount is not seen as much compared to the allocated fund to the Pentagon by the US; however, it should also be noted that the amount allocated by the US and EU are too high compared to their allocated fund for the social spending.

The reason for this increment depends on many factors. As President Trump and many other politicians in Europe have stated, one of their reasons is that immigrants take the jobs and lower the wages, and they are not paying their fair share. With such a policy, in order to prevent illegal immigration, border controls can be stated as the third reason of the recent increment in the military spending:

3. Border security

While governments decide to take measures, and increase their military spending, the biggest winners in the military buildup are the defense contractors. Especially, due to high demands to the US companies such as Lockheed Martin, Boeing and General Dynamics, that spend millions of dollars each year lobbying in the Congress, this is a win-win situation for the US government and the companies. With high demands to the US military contractors, US obtains foreign investment, which also affects the government in a positive way. Therefore, we can state that the bills that are passed by the US congress by the lobbying of defense contractors, which benefits the contractors and the government is another reason that US decides to invest and increase their spending on military. Therefore, the military and defense contractors has created a profitable economic market, which causes to increase in the military spending. Therefore, the fourth reason that we can state as the reason of increased military spending is:

4. Lobbying of defense contractors and the profit of the US government by the defense contraction market

When it is looked at the outcomes of the increased military spending as the results of these four reasons, it is possible to see two outcomes: decrement in the social spending of the government and risks the international security as it increases the chance of an outbreak of a war.

When a government, especially the government of a developing country decides on increasing military spending, since they usually do not have enough budget, they have to have a cut, and it usually occurs welfare cuts by reasoning that cuts on welfare spending usually increases the incentives for people to join the labor force, therefore, it would increase labor productivity. However, increment in the labor productivity is not always the outcome, so as the effect of the opportunity cost, cuts in social spending for increasing military spending affects the welfare and income of the society.

The second outcome is the chance of an outbreak of a war. The data of European countries and US shows that the current military spending is even higher than the spending during the World Wars and the Cold War. The reason is that when a nation wants to increase its military power due to a recent development, the military spending of the related Member States also increase exponentially for becoming powerful against the others that are strengthen their military. This leads to an arms race, which has the potential to turn into a war. Thus, it threatens the safety of the civilians as an outcome.

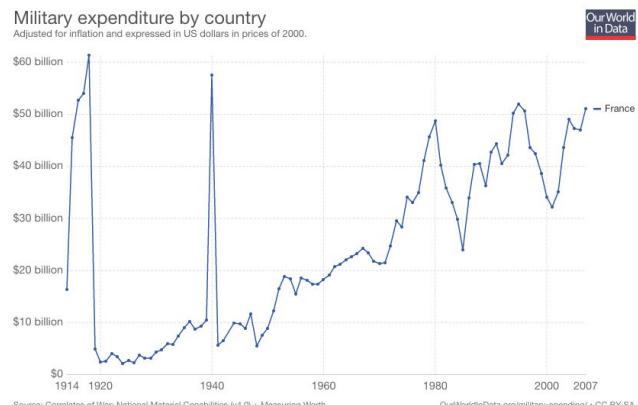
Major Parties Involved and Their Views

United States of America:

As it was mentioned in the General Overview, US is a key factor in the increased military spending. Because of its influential role in the market, it makes profit out of the increased military spending since most defense contractors are US companies. Therefore, it can be stated that US benefits from increased military spending. Also, in order to maintain its political and economic power, military operations cover the majority of the allocated military budget of the US. In addition to that, with a recent bill on February, Trump administration has decided to increase the budget of the pentagon to \$700 billion, which is the highest that Pentagon has ever seen by reasoning the threats by the terrorist organizations, Russia, China, and North Korea. These situations show that, with the recent political disputes in MENA, Latin America, and with its political rivals, the US tries to preserve its economic and political benefits by being powerful with its military capabilities.

France

After the call of the US to NATO members for focusing on the threats posed by Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea, and terrorist organizations in the Middle East, France has unveiled their plans to boost military spending by more than a third until 2025. With the call of the President Trump, President Macron has presented a 364\$ billion bill, which is the highest number that Europe's biggest army has seen after the World Wars. It is possible to see that the military expenditures of France started to increase drastically after the year 2000. After this year, there was an increase in the terrorist activates in France in addition to increased illegal immigration. Therefore, it can be stated that in addition to the call by the President Trump to NATO, the increase in military spending of France has started at the beginning of the 21st century, most probably due to threats to the homeland security.



China:

Just days after President Trump announced a boost to the US defence budget, China has stated that they will increase their military spending by 7 % this year. There have been many incidents between US, China, and the nations bordering the South China Sea due to the claims of these nations over the South China Sea and the islands. China has seriously been involved in clashes with the ships of Vietnam, Philippines, and the US in the South China Sea. Therefore, China's claims over the islands, which store petrol and many natural resources, can be stated as the reason for China's increased military spending. As US has decided to increase its military spending, China has also acted in the same way and tried to set the military balance in order to stay strong against possible threats by the US. It should be noted that China neither signed nor ratified the Arms Trade Treaty, which indicates that the increase in China's military spending might be higher than it was announced by the government, as the state does not fully support transparency on this matter.

Russia:

"The Pentagon's budget for the next year will be over \$700 bln. The budget of the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense will be about \$60 bln and the budget of defense agencies of France and Germany will be \$40 bln each. No comments are needed," ("Russia to shell out") stated Sergei Shoigu, the Minister of Defense of Russia. Therefore, it is pretty clear that the main reason that Russia displays an increase in its military spending is to set a military balance, thus, staying powerful in possible conflicts. In addition to that, "The number of NATO forces deployed close to Russia's borders has grown from 10,000 to 40,000 troops," since 2012 according to the minister ("Russia to shell out"). Hence, Russia's concern over the sovereignty of its borders, and its concern for a possible attack from the western block have made the Ministry of Defense to go to an increment in its military spending. In addition to that, Russia has deployed 48,000 troops in Syria, which indicates an increment in its military spending for the maintenance and preserving economic and political power. It should also be noted that Russia is another Member State, which neither signed nor ratified the Arms Trade Treaty.

Iran:

With the ratification of the Iran Nuclear Deal, The Islamic State of Iran has reduced its military spending with a number of 3000 million USDs. With such a change, the Iran was the 19th in the ranking of the military expenditures as a share of global total, which indicates a comparatively low military expenditure compared to the power of Iran. However, in 2017, the new government of President Hassan Rouhani has decided to prepare a new military bill in The Parliament, in which it was called as a plan for confronting the "threats, malicious, hegemonic and divisive activities of America in the region." (Erdbrink). With the new bill, Iran has decided to spend 260 million USDs on its ballistic missile program and around 300 million USDs on Quds Brigade, which is the special forces unit of the state's Revolutionary Guards responsible for the extraterritorial operations. Thus, setting military balance and the maintenance and preserving economic and political power are the reasons for the increment in the military expenditures of Iran.



Israel:

According to Haaretz, in September 2017, Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman has privately stated that \$20 billion per year is insufficient to address the new regional threats (Harel). Hezbollah's Iranian-financed arms buildup, the possibility of the reinforcement of Iranian forces and Shiite militias to Israeli border, and a possible Assad victory in the Syrian Civil War has concerned the ministry of defense. Thus, Israel is planning on increasing its military spending. It can be stated that the main reason for the increment in the military spending of Israel is border security.

Saudi Arabia:

Saudi Arabia has recently decided to increase its military spending by 6.7%. Since March 2015, Saudi-led Arab coalition has been intervening in Yemen for supporting the government of Hadi and defeat the Houthis. According to Reuters, Saudi Arabia will continue buying weapons from the western suppliers such as US, UK, and France in order to preserve its benefits from the region. ("Saudi Arabia to raise") Thus, the increment in Saudi Arabia's military spending can be classified as "maintenance and preserving economic and political power" in the region. In the ranking of the military spending according to spending as a percentage of GDP, Saudi Arabia is the leading nation, which indicates that the government is not allocating the full budget for the internal spending.

Timeline of Events

12 December 1980	A/RES/35/142A was adapted, which is the first UN document for preventing increased military spending.
9 December 1981	A/RES/36/82 was adapted.
1980-1991	The global defense spending reaches to the highest values ever with a peak of 1.67 trillion.
1998	UNODA was established.
2001	US intervention in Afghanistan increases the global defense spending, which was comparatively low since 1991 due to the end of the Cold War.
2003	The global defense spending passes \$1300 billion with the US intervention in Iraq.
2011	The global defense spending passes \$1500 with the US intervention in Libya.
2014	Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was signed.
2014	With the intervention of coalition forces in the Syrian Civil War, many neighboring Member States has decided to increase their military expenditures.
2015	With the ratification of the Iran Nuclear Deal, The Islamic State of Iran has reduced its military spending with a number of \$3000 million USDs.
2015	Yemeni Civil War breaks out, which causes many neighboring Member States and the intervening states to increase their allocated military budget.

2016	Military Spending in Africa has fallen by 1.3%, which is a decrease after eleven years of consecutive increases. Although the conflicts have continued to rise, the reason of this decrease is due to worsening economic crisis due to spending cuts in oil-exporting countries.
2016	Military spending as a share of GDP was highest in the Middle East with an average of 6% due to increment in the number of conflicts.
2016	Military expenditures as a share of GDP in Asia and Oceania have increased to an average of 4.6% due to the recent developments in the South China Sea.
2016	Even though the numbers of conflicts have increased, the military expenditures as a share of GDP in South America and Caribbeans have decreased with an average of 7.8% after 9 years of increase due to the worsening economic capabilities.
2017	The Parliament in Iran has decided to spend 260 million USDs on its ballistic missile program and around \$300 million on Quds Brigade in response to US's activities in the region.
February 2018	President Trump has increased the military budget of Pentagon to \$700 billion, which is the greatest budget the Pentagon has ever seen.
February 2018	China has stated that they will increase their military spending by 7 % this year in response to President Trump's action.

UN Involvement

The first committee of UN General Assembly, Disarmament and International Security considers all disarmament and international security matters within the scope of the UN Charter. It is obvious that UN takes preventing the increment of the military spending seriously since the duty of such an influential committee is so. In 1998, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) was established as the result of the Secretary General's report, A/51/950. UNODA aims nuclear and military disarmament in cooperation with the first committee by sponsoring many draft resolutions. As it was mentioned before, mutual trust between nations prevent Member States to increase their military spending since the spending of the related Member States increase exponentially when a nation decides to boost its military

expenditures. UNODA tries to set this mutual trust through motivating nations for transparency on their increased military spending.

However, unfortunately, UNODA just encourages Member States to reveal their data instead of being a mediator between nations. Unfortunately, the tension between nations lead to increment in military spending. Therefore, instead of just encouraging, an organization for mediation would have been efficient.

Relevant UN Documents

A/RES/35/142A: This is the first resolution that expressed its concerns about the arms race and growing military expenditures that constitutes to a heavy burden for the economies and have harmful effects on the world peace and security. This resolution recommends the Member States to report their military expenditure to the Secretariat.

A/RES/36/82: Urges nations to freeze, reduce, or restrain military expenditures with a view to reallocating the saved fund to economic and social development. Also, calls nations for transparency in their military spending in order to create a mutual trust, thus leading to international agreements on the reduction of the military expenditures. For such purposes, this resolution suggests to make collections and assemble data on military expenses of Member States that will be reported by the States itself and published by the UN.

Treaties and Events

Arms Trade Treaty (ATT): It is a multilateral treaty that aims to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons. It regulates the international trade in conventional arms, which entered into force on December 24, 2014. Since inadequate controls of arms have led to the availability of the weapons and the misusage of them, ATT aims to limit arms race and increased military spending through regulations and international laws for the trading of arms.

UN Register of Conventional Arms: For transparency among nations on their military spending, UNODA has decided to create a mutual database for the nations to submit their military spending data to the system. Since then, 170 Members have submitted their data. Thus, UN Register of Conventional Arms creates transparency among Member States, which contributes to preventive diplomacy and encourages Members to restrain from increased military spending.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

Creating a mutual database was a step for creating mutual trust among nations, therefore, increased military spending of the Members would have been prevented. However, due to the fact that the nations submit their own data on themselves, it is possible to question the accuracy of the data since there is no UN inspector involved in the process. In addition to that, this database just shows the increment in the military budget allocation, it does not show the allocation of the military budget to different areas or the reasons of the increment. This creates the confusion whether a nation arms for national security or for offensive purposes. This confusion especially plays role in the cases where a nation arms for preserving its economic and political power in abroad. For example, although many Member States have increased their allocated military budget for participating in the civil wars in MENA region for preserving their political benefits or for increasing their border security, there was confusions on the purpose of the increased

spending, which led to political tensions. Also, as it was stated, communication between Member States would also prevent increased military spending; however, no UN document or resolution mentions to mediation or dialogues among nations for preventing increased military spending for setting military balance.

Possible Solutions

As it was mentioned in the general overview, the reasons of the increased military spending can be scrutinized in 4 separate parts: maintenance and preserving economic and political power; preventing the formation of new militia and guerilla forces, and fighting against the existing ones to ensure the continuation of the government and the nation; border security; lobbying of defense contractors and the profit of the US government by the defense contraction market. In order to prevent the military spending to reach to the peak of the Cold War, the delegates should look for solution for all these separate reasons.

1. Maintenance and Preserving economic and political power

As it was stated, in order to gain political and economic power, many Member States have been operating in the conflicts abroad. The first step should be preventing the public to be affected by such operations. For conducting such operations, the state usually cuts from social spending, so the delegates should look for measures to prevent social cuts for conducting operations abroad. If the public will be informed about such cuts, then they would not be really in favor of such operations. And, if the government cannot take the endorsement of the public, then they would not be very eager to conduct operations, which can eventually reduce the military spending for operations abroad. In addition to that, having joint military forces instead of nations individually fighting for their benefits would reduce the military spending of nations individually.

2. Preventing the formation of new militia and guerilla forces, and fighting against the existing ones to ensure the continuation of the government and the nation

As the one of the main reasons for the increment in the military spending, the delegates should find ways to eradicate terrorist organizations and guerilla forces. As it was mentioned as the first two reasons of the increased military spending, terrorist organizations and guerilla forces and the economic and political benefits in the conflict regions are the main reasons of increased military spending. Therefore, the delegates should focus on the regions such as Africa, Latin America, and MENA separately in order to find ways to eradicate all parties responsible of the act of terror in the conflict regions. Instead of increasing the military spending for having clashes and battles against such organisations, one of the most important action would be trying to cut the resources of these organisations as it would neutralize the militants without increasing the military spending. As many influential countries allocate most of their military budget in these areas, eradicating such forces would reduce the military spending. Eradication would show its effects in a long term since the allocated military budget for eradication will decrease military spending gradually.

3. Border security

Although the first two reasons of the increased military spending are solvable in such ways in a long term, there are not so many measures to prevent the increment in the allocated military budget for border security. Since it is the internal affair of nations to decide on these measures, the UN cannot interfere with their decisions. One way to reduce military spending for border security is to initiate peace talks and agreements between disputed Member States that are sharing borders if the increased border security is due to a political or military conflict. If peace talks will be initiated, then agreements would follow such

talks, which would ease the tension in the conflict regions and can lead to a reduction in the military spending. Assigning UN observes to the borders of the nations with the highest border spending would be another step since it would allow the UN to give feedback to the government on alternatives for reducing the border spending and using that money for better purposes.

4. Lobbying of defense contractors and the profit of the US government by the defense contraction market

It is not completely possible to interfere with the arms market and reduce government spending. Therefore, one way of reducing the effect of the lobbying of defense contractors would be setting transparency in the arms market. After having complete transparency in the market, nations will not be able to increase their military spending with the effect of the defense contractors due to the fact that increase in the military spending would bring embargoes by the other nations or the international organisations under full transparency. Thus, giving incentives to the Member States for participating into the UN Register of Conventional Arms would be crucial since just 170 Members are currently the Members of this database. Also, in order to enhance the accuracy of the database, assigning UN officials to the Member States for investigating and ensuring the accuracy of the data would also be crucial for complete transparency. Under full transparency, the effect of the defense contractors would be negligible.

Notes from the Chair

The delegates should first consider in which block they will be during the debate and lobbying sessions. Considering the following questions would be beneficial while considering their block, solution ideas, and the side during the debate.

Does your country support disarmament in general?

Does your country support transparency on the allocation of military budget among nations for creating mutual trust?

How much does your nation allocate to military annually and what is the percent in the GDP share of this allocation?

Does your country support registering your arms in UN Register of Conventional Arms?

What percent of your GDP does arms cover?

Are there any conflicts going on within your country, or at your borders?

Does your country support a party in terms of military support in a conflict abroad?

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