



- disarmament to combat poverty - désarmer pour combattre la pauvreté - desarmar para combatir la pobreza -

## The 10% Option: towards a global new deal for human security

The 10% Option promotes a federative move to back up an efficient measure geared towards improving local as well as global human security: the implementation in all countries of 10% reduction in military expenditures and arms trade to be converted into social investments to develop access to basic rights such as social security, health and education for all.

### 1. Less arms, more rights: the right way towards social and democratic progress

Safety ranks high on the list of the universal human rights. The basic needs of human security go much beyond the national security concerns to encompass all forms of economic and social insecurities which badly and often violently affect people in their day-to-day lives. The alleviation of the most massive form of insecurity that is poverty is thus a major component of the global human security agenda.

All historical experiences attest that no social progress has ever been achieved without mobilizing the capacities of the people to voice their demands, to protest and propose publicly, to contest and address the political and economic powers and policies: basic human rights, social rights and political rights are strongly inter-linked and shall be activated jointly to combat poverty effectively and develop democracy. Unfortunately, in many countries, democratic rights are being restricted by overt and often covert militarization of the regime and the society.

The extension of the arms race, the persistence of forged or fuelled nationalistic antagonisms, the development of "war policies and industries", are directly related to the degree of penetration of the military interests into the political, economic and mediatic spheres, in the North as well as in the South. The demand for "less arms and more rights" put forward by the 10% Option is thus crucial in order to curb down the militarization trends and boost up democratic and social developments.

### 2. Extending the agenda of non-violence from the civil societies to the States

Grassroots activists are daily experimenting the relevance and the efficiency of empowering poor people to non-violent fights for rights in their quest for liberation from want and fear.

The culture of non-violence is being promoted by the UN in a context of growing concern over the influence of various forms of terrorism on populations at large and youth in particular.

All these efforts are bound to have limited impact so long the democratic agenda is not presented as a clear political commitment to non-violent resolutions of social conflicts; and violence continues to be promoted as legitimate priority for dealing with international conflicts. Regarding the fundamental stand to reduce all forms of violence by non-violent democratic means, coherence is a key factor for credibility and efficiency.

Hence the need for extending the agenda of non-violence to the States by supporting the 10% Option, adopting non-aggressive national defense policies, reducing arms production and arms trade, promoting "no war zones" through regional cooperation agreements.



### **3. Rebalancing the national defense requirements and the social development investments.**

There is a growing concern over the gross unbalance which prevails between the massive military expenditures and the meagre amounts invested in development. At the global level, the military and weaponry expenses keep increasing and exceed already 1,100 billions US dollars per year. According to UN estimations, a mere 10% cut would be sufficient to finance the eradication of poverty ; 15 billions US dollars per year would allow access to drinking water for all ; 20 billions would eliminate hunger and 12 billions would ensure basic education to all children in the world...

Given the level of accumulation of weaponry in most States, it is possible to reduce the military budgets without putting at stake the national defense requirements.

Thus the 10% Option proposes to examine rationally the possibilities and advantages of striking a new balance within national budgets and public investments to combine sustainable defense and social development policies to better serve the security needs of the people:

- the national security needs, by adopting defensive policies, much safer and much less expensive than offensive and wary policies;
- the social security needs, by increasing social development investments, including all forms of social protections as a major non-violent tool to combat poverty, boost up development and erase brutal inequalities.

### **4. 100% transparency**

As far as military and weaponry policies go, too few people have access to informations and decisions which directly concern the lives of billions of people and the allocation of huge amounts of public money.

The lack of democratic control on such crucial issues is neither healthy nor safe ; it does not guarantee that data cannot be manipulated by vested interests with no genuine concern for the security of the people. In the same way, the control on the allocation of funds and implementation of schemes related to social development is equally required. In the search for ensuring more safety to all, democracy goes with efficiency.

Hence the need for 100% transparency. In this respect, the 10% Option is committed to enlarging the circulation of information and the involvement of social actors and representatives from the civil society at large to debate and follow-up all policies related to the security of the people and to monitor the 10% conversion process.



## 5. A global perspective which can emerge from unilateral moves

Multilateral negotiations and agreements provide indeed the most relevant frame to conceive and conduct disarmament policies. With the worrying limitation that the vast majority of the people and the countries are so far completely dependant on the positions taken by the biggest military powers and arms producing States...

In this context, the 10% Option opens the door to sustainable unilateral moves which can reenforce multilateral efforts, initiate new national policies and international alliances between those countries, in the North and in the South, who strongly feel the need to secure more autonomous defense policies without nuclear and other mass destruction weapons, reduce their dependancy on arms trade and war industry, enlarge their capacity to develop economic and cultural cooperations and ensure basic social and democratic rights to all.

The 10% Option provides indeed readily available public financing for strategical social investments.

For instance: in France it could finance the launching of the national voluntary social action scheme for youth ; in India it could initiate the financing and secure the national solidarity base of the unorganised workers social security scheme which is debated by the Parliament.

Hence the 10% Option offers the possibility for any country, irrespective of its size, to engage safely into an alternative approach of international influence, not based on military muscle, but on moral and political commitment to the peace and social justice agenda, and to take part into the lead towards a global new deal for human security.

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