

Action of Immediate Witness for GA 2022

Code Red for Humanity

Protect the Livable Planet We Love - Addressing the Climate Impacts of Military Emissions

WHEREAS:

- Calling on Unitarian Universalists and others to protect humanity. If ever in our history, there was a time for us to affirm our sixth Unitarian Universalist Principle, “*The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all*” and our seventh, “*Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part,*” this is it.
- In 2020, United Nations General Assembly President, María Garcés, warned “**We are the LAST generation that can prevent irreparable damage to our planet.**” UN Secretary General António Guterres has warned that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 6th Assessment Report of Aug. 9, 2021 is **CODE RED FOR HUMANITY** and “**an atlas of human suffering.**” He called out that the extent of this climate emergency is the result of “**CRIMINAL abdication of (climate) leadership.**” With the IPCC’s latest Report of Apr 8, 2022, Guterres further warned action is required **NOW or NEVER.**
- This challenges UUs to respond to their warnings with *our right of conscience, our use of the democratic process in our congregations and as advocates within society, to prioritize saving vulnerable and essential ecosystems and human communities “with justice, equity and compassion”* while there is still time.
- The atmosphere has been disrupted by human caused greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, with carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels the highest in 3.6 million years. [Despite pandemic shutdowns, carbon dioxide and methane surged in 2020 - Welcome to NOAA Research](#)
- The earth’s surface temperature has risen 1.1°C (1.9°F) since 1880, with 2022 predictions that it may exceed 1.5°C, at least once before

2026, requiring unprecedented and urgent action to avoid irreversible global warming. [World of Change: Global Temperatures \(nasa.gov\)](#);
[Climate change: Global warming may exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius in at least one of the next five years - CBS News](#)

- Many of the changes observed are unprecedented in thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of years, and some of the changes already set in motion – such as continued sea level rise – are already deemed irreversible over hundreds to thousands of years. [Climate change widespread, rapid, and intensifying – IPCC — IPCC](#)
- There are now more than 3 billion people now at risk as a result of climate change,
- The US Department of Defense (DoD) is the world’s largest institutional user of fossil fuels and consequently, also the world’s largest institutional contributor of GHG emissions.
- Global military emissions, *including war impacts*, are estimated to be 6% of total annual GHG emissions according to Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR), making militarism a critically important, but little recognized, driver of climate change.
- According to research from the World Research Institute, the United States bears responsibility for 29% of the world’s largest cumulative greenhouse gases.
- And for the first time, NATO’s Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg is calling for mapping military emissions across the Alliance as a way of reducing them.
- Scientists deem the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) of the United States to be **critically insufficient** and is falling far short of a fair meeting the 1.5°C goal. Yet these emissions are not included or delineated as part of our NDC or in our annual GHG reporting to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),
- In the face of our responsibilities as citizens of the offending nation whose actions have greatly contributed to immediate and future threats of climate impacts, we affirm our ever- greater acceptance of one another and encourage spiritual growth in our congregations as

we call for accountability and appropriate action by our government and its leaders.

- People around the globe are already being displaced from their homes by the effects of the climate crisis, and instead of providing complementary protection, governments are responding with militarized approaches that further the exclusion of displaced people and increase the climate effects of military emissions. The U.S. government has been a leading contributor to both the historic carbon emissions and the specifically military factors that are fueling the climate crisis. This includes the history of U.S. militarism in the Pacific (such as nuclear testing) that harmed communities who are now on the front lines of climate impacts, as well as the pattern of U.S. foreign policy backing militarized regimes in the Global South that are committing human rights violations that exacerbate climate displacement
- A survivable climate is a necessary foundation for a viable and just economy to support many UU social justice goals.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2022 UUA General Assembly, its member congregations, and individual Unitarian Universalists take immediate action to:

- Recognize that militarism and war are major obstacles to meeting the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Accords requiring urgent united action to meet livable climate goals.
- Invite our member congregations and ministries to organize moments in worship and religious education to support Climate Justice including cultivating actions and advocacy to reduce the overall environmental impact of all military activities.
- Urge Members of Congress (MOC) to support legislation that reduces emission impacts and particularly those of the Department of Defense (DoD).
- Ask the US Administration and Congress to show international leadership by calling for the United States to specify all DoD emissions in our annual GHG reporting in the UN Framework

Convention of Climate Change (UNFCCC) and to include and delineate them, along with reduction targets as part of our Nationally Determined Contributions.

- Request that UU at the UN support the above actions as well as work to strengthen and broaden the UN's military emissions protocols.
- We ask the Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community, the Unitarian Universalists for Social Justice, the Unitarian Universalist Ministry for Earth, and other national Unitarian Universalist networks to unify and provide ethical and moral leadership for supporting this Action of Immediate Witness on behalf of peace and diplomacy and towards maintaining a livable planet for the benefit of all.

A few reference materials:

United Nations

United Nations Framework on Convention of Climate Change Sixth Assessment Reports:

<https://unfccc.int/topics/science/workstreams/cooperation-with-the-ipcc/the-sixth-assessment-report-of-the-ipcc>

INSTITUTE ON POLICY STUDIES:

NO WARMING, NO WAR: HOW MILITARISM FUELS THE CLIMATE CRISIS — AND VICE VERSA

[HTTPS://IPS-DC.ORG/CLIMATE-MILITARISM-](HTTPS://IPS-DC.ORG/CLIMATE-MILITARISM-PRIMER/#:~:TEXT=MILITARISM%20AND%20CLIMATE%20JUSTICE%20ARE%20FUNDAMENTALLY%20AT%20ODDS.,MILITARIZATION%20TO%20UPHOLD%20ITS%20OPERATIONS%20AROUND%20THE%20GLOBE)

[PRIMER/#:~:TEXT=MILITARISM%20AND%20CLIMATE%20JUSTICE%20ARE%20FUNDAMENTALLY%20AT%20ODDS.,MILITARIZATION%20TO%20UPHOLD%20ITS%20OPERATIONS%20AROUND%20THE%20GLOBE](HTTPS://IPS-DC.ORG/CLIMATE-MILITARISM-PRIMER/#:~:TEXT=MILITARISM%20AND%20CLIMATE%20JUSTICE%20ARE%20FUNDAMENTALLY%20AT%20ODDS.,MILITARIZATION%20TO%20UPHOLD%20ITS%20OPERATIONS%20AROUND%20THE%20GLOBE)

CONFLICT AND ENVIRONMENT OBSERVATORY:

- 1) *The military's contribution to climate change.* <https://ceobs.org/the-militarys-contribution-to-climate-change/>
- 2) *Did NATO members just pledge to reduce their military GHG emissions?* <https://ceobs.org/did-nato-members-just-pledge-to-reduce-their-military-ghg-emissions/>

- 3) *Environmental Corporate Social Responsibility Reporting by the Arms Industry* <https://ceobs.org/environmental-csr-reporting-by-the-arms-industry/>

Brown University Costs of War Project:

Pentagon Fuel Use, Climate Change, and the Costs of War.

<https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/papers/ClimateChangeandCostofWar> Dato A (2017).

"How the Russian invasion is impacting the Ukrainian landscape" by Neta Crawford *IA WAMU: NPR*, April 25, 2022.

Military Emissions. Org

[The Military Emissions Gap – Tracking the long war that militaries are waging on the climate](#)

National Priorities Project

[Climate, Militarism, and Migration \(nationalpriorities.org\)](#)

Scientists for Social Responsibility

<https://www.sgr.org.uk/resources/carbon-boot-print-military-0>

Intergenerational inequities in exposure to climate extremes

https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abi7339?_ga=2.140428851.1086394533.1632749462-1575527405.1631121912&