

Environment, security and foreign affairs

[A4-0005/1999](#)

Resolution on the environment, security and foreign policy

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs Rehn on the potential use of military-related resources for environmental strategies (B4-0551/95),
- having regard to the UN study 'Charting potential uses of resources allocated to military activities for civilian endeavours to protect the environment', UN (A46/364, 17 September 1991),
- having regard to its resolution of 29 June 1995 on anti-personnel landmines: a murderous impediment to development⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on non-proliferation and the testing of nuclear weapons and the Canberra Commission report of August 1996 on the abolition of nuclear weapons,
- having regard to the International Court's unanimous ruling on the obligation of the nuclear weapon states to negotiate for a ban on nuclear weapons (Advisory Opinion No. 96/22 of 8 July 1996),
- having regard to its opinion of 19 April 1996 on the proposal for a Council Decision establishing a Community action programme in the field of civil protection (COM(95)0155 - C4-0221/95 - 95/0098 (CNS))⁽²⁾,
- having regard to its earlier resolutions on chemical weapons,
- having regard to the outcome of the UN Conferences in Kyoto in 1997 and Rio de Janeiro in 1992,
- having regard to the hearing on HAARP and Non-lethal Weapons held by its Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Security and Disarmament in Brussels on 5 February 1998,
- having regard to Rule 148 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Security and Defence Policy and the opinion of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection ([A4-0005/1999](#)),

A. whereas the end of the Cold War has radically changed the security situation in the world and whereas the relaxation of military tension has resulted in comprehensive disarmament in the military field in general and in nuclear weapons in particular, resulting in considerable cut-backs in defence budgets,

- B. whereas, despite this complete transformation of the geostrategic situation since the end of the Cold War, the risk of catastrophic damage to the integrity and sustainability of the global environment, notably its bio-diversity, has not significantly diminished, whether from the accidental or unauthorised firing of nuclear weapons or the authorised use of nuclear weapons based on a perceived but unfounded threat of impending attack,
- C. whereas this risk could be very considerably reduced within a very short timeframe by the rapid implementation by all nuclear weapons states of the six steps contained in the Canberra Commission's report concerning, in particular, the removal of all nuclear weapons from the present "hair trigger alert" readiness and the progressive transfer of all weapons into strategic reserve,
- D. whereas Article VI of the 1968 Treaty on the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) commits all of its parties to undertake "to pursue negotiations in good faith on a treaty on general and complete disarmament" and whereas the Principles and Objectives adopted at the 1995 NPT Conference reaffirmed that the Treaty's ultimate goal was the complete elimination of nuclear weapons,
- E. whereas threats to the environment, the flow of refugees, ethnic tension, terrorism and international crime are new and serious threats to security; whereas the ability to deal with various forms of conflict is increasing in importance as the security scene changes,
- F. whereas the world's resources are being exploited as if they were inexhaustible, which has led to increasingly frequent natural and environmental disasters; whereas such local and regional ecological problems may have considerable impact on international relations; regretting that this has not been more clearly reflected in national foreign, security and defence policies,
- G. whereas conflicts throughout the world are predominantly at an intra-state rather than inter-state level and, where inter-state conflicts do arise, they are increasingly concerned with access to or the availability of basic vital resources, especially water, food and fuel,
- H. whereas the access to and availability of such vital natural resources are inherently connected to environmental degradation and pollution, by both cause and effect, whereas it follows logically therefore that conflict prevention must increasingly focus on these issues,
- I. whereas all those factors, which affect the poorest and most vulnerable populations of the world most of all, are constantly increasing the incidence of so-called 'environmental refugees', resulting both in direct pressure on EU immigration and justice policies, on development assistance and spending on humanitarian aid and, indirectly, in increased security problems for the EU in the form of regional instability in other parts of the world,
- J. whereas, according to detailed international research collated and published by the Climate Institute in Washington, the number of 'environmental refugees' now exceeds the number of 'traditional refugees' (25 m compared with 22 m) and whereas this figure is expected to double by 2010 and could well rise by substantially more on a worst-case basis,
- K. whereas, since the end of the Cold War, although the management of global issues has been largely stripped of the previously dominant ideological context and is now much less determined by the question of military balance, this has yet to be reflected in the UN's system of global governance by emphasising the coherence and effectiveness of both military and non-military components of security policy,

L. whereas, nonetheless, the emphasis of a growing proportion of the UN's work on global political and security issues is essentially non-military, and notably related to the relationship between trade, aid, the environment and sustainable development,

M. whereas there is an urgent need to mobilise adequate resources to meet the environmental challenge and whereas very limited resources are available for environmental protection, for which reason a reappraisal of the use of existing resources is called for,

N. whereas as military resources have been released the armed forces have had a unique opportunity and ample capacity to support the civilian efforts to cope with the increasing environmental problems,

O. whereas military-related resources are by their nature national assets while the environmental challenge is global; whereas ways must therefore be found for international cooperation in the transfer and use of military resources for environmental protection,

P. whereas the short-term costs of environmental protection have to be seen in the light of the long-term cost of doing nothing in this field, and whereas there is an increasing need for a cost benefit analysis of various environmental strategies,

Q. whereas the common goal of restoring the world's damaged ecosystems cannot be achieved in isolation from the question of the fair exploitation of global resources and whereas there is a need to facilitate international technical cooperation and encourage the transfer of appropriate military-related technology,

R. whereas, despite the existing conventions, military research is ongoing on environmental manipulation as a weapon, as demonstrated for example by the Alaska-based HAARP system,

S. whereas the general disquiet over ecological decline and environmental crises requires the setting of priorities in the national decision-making process; whereas the individual countries must pool their efforts in response to environmental disasters,

1. Calls on the Commission to present to the Council and Parliament a common strategy, as foreseen by the Amsterdam Treaty, which brings together the CFSP aspects of EU policy with its trade, aid, development and international environmental policies between 2000 and 2010 so as to tackle the following individual issues and the relationships between them:

a) agricultural and food production and environmental degradation;

b) water shortages and transfrontier water supply;

c) deforestation and restoring carbon sinks;

d) unemployment, underemployment and absolute poverty;

e) sustainable development and climate change;

f) deforestation, desertification and population growth;

g) the link between all of the above and global warming and the humanitarian and environmental impact of increasingly extreme weather events;

2. Notes that preventive environmental measures are an important instrument of security policy; calls therefore on the Member States to define environmental and health objectives as part of their long-term defence and security assessments, military research and action plans;
3. Recognises the important part played by the armed forces in a democratic society, their national defence role and the fact that peace-keeping and peace-making initiatives can make a substantial contribution to the prevention of environmental damage;
4. Points out that atmospheric and underground nuclear tests have as a result of nuclear radiation fall-out distributed large quantities of radioactive cesium 137, strontium 90 and other cancer inducing isotopes over the whole planet and have caused considerable environmental and health damage in the test areas;
5. Calls on the Commission and the Council, given the fact that several parts of the world are threatened by the uncontrolled, unsafe and unprofessional storage and dumping of nuclear submarines and surface-vessels, as well as their radioactive fuel and leaking nuclear reactors, to take action, considering the high possibility that as a result large regions might soon start to be polluted by the radiation;
6. Demands also that an appropriate solution be found to deal with the chemical and conventional weapons which have been dumped after both World Wars in many places in the seas around Europe as an 'easy' solution to get rid of these stocks and that up to today nobody knows what might be the ecological results in the long run, in particular for the fish and for beach-life;
7. Calls on the Commission and the Council to contribute towards finding a solution to the problem that, as result of ongoing warfare in whole regions of Africa, human and agricultural structures have been ruined and therefore the lands are now subject to environmental disaster in particular by deforestation and erosion leading to desertification;
8. Calls on the military to end all activities which contribute to damaging the environment and health and to undertake all steps necessary to clean up and decontaminate the polluted areas;

Use of military resources for environmental purposes

9. Considers that the resources available to reverse or stem damage to the environment are inadequate to meet the global challenge; recommends therefore that the Member States seek to utilise military-related resources for environmental protection by:
 - a) considering which military resources can be made available to the United Nations on a temporary, long-term or stand-by basis as an instrument for international cooperation in environmental disasters or crises;
 - b) drawing up international and European protection programmes using military personnel, equipment and facilities made available under the Partnership for Peace for use in environmental emergencies;
 - c) incorporating objectives for environmental protection and sustainable development in their security concepts;
 - d) ensuring that their armed forces comply with specific environmental rules and that damage caused by them to the environment in the past is made good;

e) including environmental considerations in their military research and development programmes;

10. Urges the Commission, since practical experience in the field is limited, to:

a) establish the exchange of information on current national experience in environmental applications for military resources;

b) take action within the UN to facilitate the global dissemination of environmental data including such data obtained by the use of military satellites and other information-gathering platforms;

11. Calls on the Member States to apply civil environmental legislation to all military activities and to assume responsibility for, and pay for, the investigation, clean-up and decontamination of areas damaged by past military activity, so that such areas can be returned to civil use; this is especially important for the extensive chemical and conventional munition dumps along the coastlines of the EU;

12. Calls on all Member States to formulate environmental and health objectives and action plans so as to enhance the measures taken by their armed forces to protect the environment and health;

13. Calls on the governments of the Member States gradually to improve the protection of the environment by the armed forces by means of training and technical development and by giving all regular and conscript personnel basic training in environmental matters;

14. Considers that environmental strategies should be able to include monitoring the world environment, assessing the data thus collected, coordinating scientific work and disseminating information, exploiting relevant data from national observation and monitoring systems to give a continuous and comprehensive picture of the state of the environment;

15. Notes that the drastic fall in military expenditure could result in substantial problems in certain regions and calls on the Member States to step up their efforts to convert military production facilities and technologies to produce civil goods, and for civil applications, using national programmes and Community initiatives such as the KONVER programme;

16. Stresses the importance of stepping up preventive environmental work with a view to combating environmental and natural disasters;

17. Calls on the Council to do more to ensure that the USA, Russia, India and China sign the 1997 Ottawa Treaty, banning anti-personnel mines, without delay;

18. Believes that the EU should do more to help the victims of landmines and to support the development of mine clearance techniques, and that the development of mine clearance methods should be accelerated;

19. Calls on the Member States to develop environmentally-sound technology for the destruction of weapons;

20. Notes that one of the potentially most serious threats that exist on the EU's doorstep lies in the inadequate monitoring of waste from nuclear arms processing and of biological and chemical weapons stores and in the need for decontamination following military activity; stresses that it is important that the Member States actively promote increased international cooperation, for instance within the UN and the Partnership for Peace, with the aim of destroying such weapons in as environment-friendly a way as

possible;

21. Takes the view that all further negotiations on the reduction and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons must be based on the principles of mutual and balanced reduction commitments;

22. Takes the view that, given the particularly difficult circumstances afflicting the countries of the former Soviet Union, the threat to the global as well as local environment posed by the degradation of the condition of nuclear weapons and materials still held in those countries makes it an even more urgent priority to reach agreement on the further gradual elimination of nuclear weapons;

Legal aspects of military activities

23. Calls on the European Union to seek to have the new 'non-lethal' weapons technology and the development of new arms strategies also covered and regulated by international conventions;

24. Considers HAARP (High Frequency Active Auroral Research Project) by virtue of its far-reaching impact on the environment to be a global concern and calls for its legal, ecological and ethical implications to be examined by an international independent body before any further research and testing; regrets the repeated refusal of the United States Administration to send anyone in person to give evidence to the public hearing or any subsequent meeting held by its competent committee into the environmental and public risks connected with the HAARP programme currently being funded in Alaska;

25. Requests the Scientific and Technological Options Assessment (STOA) Panel to agree to examine the scientific and technical evidence provided in all existing research findings on HAARP to assess the exact nature and degree of risk that HAARP poses both to the local and global environment and to public health generally;

26. Calls on the Commission to examine if there are environmental and public health implications of the HAARP programme for Arctic Europe and to report back to Parliament with its findings;

27. Calls for an international convention introducing a global ban on all developments and deployments of weapons which might enable any form of manipulation of human beings;

28. Calls on the Commission and the Council to work for the conclusion of international treaties to protect the environment from unnecessary destruction in the event of war;

29. Calls on the Commission and the Council to work towards the establishment of international standards for the environmental impact of peacetime military activities;

30. Calls on the Council to play an active part in the implementation of the proposals of the Canberra Commission and Article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty on nuclear disarmament;

31. Calls on the Council, and the British and French governments in particular, to take the lead within the framework of the NPT and the Conference on Disarmament with regard to the further negotiations towards full implementation of the commitments on nuclear weapons reductions and elimination as rapidly as possible to a level where, in the interim, the global stock of remaining weapons poses no threat to the integrity and sustainability of the global environment;

32. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the governments of the Member States to advocate the

approach taken in this resolution in all further United Nations meetings held under the auspices of or in relation to the NPT and the Conference on Disarmament;

33. Calls on the Council and the Commission, in accordance with Article J.7 of the Treaty on European Union, to report to it on the Union's position concerning the specific points contained in this resolution within the context of forthcoming meetings of the United Nations, its agencies and bodies, notably the 1999 Preparatory Committee of the NPT, the Conference on Disarmament and all other relevant international fora;

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34. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States of the European Union and to the United Nations.

⁽¹⁾OJ C 183, 17.7.1995, p. 47.

⁽²⁾OJ C 141, 13.5.1996, p. 258.