

Elizabeth Moore

*We must change our current trajectory if we are to avert climate and ecological collapse. That means moving away from a militarised economy based on extractive industries towards a sustainable peaceful future*

The next 5-10 years are critical if we are to avoid ecological collapse and out of control climate change which will in turn likely lead to more wars as countries become less stable. The military industrial complex contributes a significant amount to fossil fuel emissions. Military spending is also rising significantly and reducing the amount we have to spend on conservation and alternative energy programs as well as much needed social and health services. A clear priority is for Australia to work with first nation communities to address the damage caused by colonisation. This must start with us signing the Uluru statement and taking the lead from Aboriginal communities rather than dictating to them. Significant investment is required across multiple areas to address gaps in health employment, education homelessness and overcrowding and other critical areas for Aboriginal people. . Australia must also invest in a sustainable recovery from the COVID 19 pandemic - noting that t we will need to be responding to ongoing climate changed severe weather events and bushfires over the coming years. We can not achieve all these aims whilst military spending continues to increase.

The arms industry is sadly growing and is fuelling instability and wars. The links between the arms industry and some senior ex politicians is also risking corruption of the political process. The US - Australian alliance has led us into multiple wars and has on the whole increased the risk to Australia's security rather than decreased it. The toll on Australians who have served in these wars is immense in terms of lives directly lost, injuries and ongoing harm including suicide and PTSD. . Of course the toll on the local population in areas such as Iraq is also huge.

Australia should move to a non aligned stance and away from the US - Australian military alliance. We need to, drastically reduce our spending on the military and move towards a sustainable future where we learn from our first nation communities about how to live in harmony with our environment. We must make these changes now for our sakes but also for the sake of our children and grandchildren as well as for all the creatures that we share our beautiful country with.