

I am a young scientist and mathematician with a keen interest in securing a sustainable future for all people on Earth. I, like many young people, see myself as a global citizen and I am extremely conscious of the major problems that all countries, including Australia, must address urgently.

I strongly urge the Australian government to drastically reduce its spending on defence and military, and to instead immediately direct strong funding to renewable energy, pollution elimination, health and education. I form this advice with my scientific and mathematical background in mind, and I cannot stress enough how urgently the Australian government needs to take these actions.

It is absurd that the federal government's spending on defence is of a comparable magnitude to its spending on education. This is even more disturbing when keeping in mind the recently announced additional \$270 billion to expand Australia's military. In 2021 the world is more interconnected than ever before and we have surpassed the age of military warfare between developed nations.

Like many other young people, I do not want to see Australia continue to use its military to follow the United States into wars that are not in the best interests of Australians. Furthermore, I do not want to see continued destabilisation of regions and human rights atrocities like those committed by Australian troops in Afghanistan. These exercises have arguably severely jeopardised Australia's security, rather than increased it, as seen by increasing threats of terrorism.

The general consensus among International Relations scholars is that climate change is the biggest threat to global security currently. And it is the overwhelming consensus among scientists that this is the most eminent and severe threat that must be addressed by all countries, and especially developed nations, with highest priority. I form this advice based on my own scientific background and I also point to the statement made by the Australian Academy of Science regarding the 2019-2020 bushfires:

“The scientific evidence base shows that as the world warms due to human induced climate change, we experience an increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events.... Australia must take stronger action as its part of the worldwide commitment to limit global warming to 1.5° C above the long-term average to reduce the worst impacts of climate change.”

The full statement can be found here: https://www.science.org.au/news-and-events/news-and-media-releases/statement-regarding-australian-bushfires?fbclid=IwAR1PCsBG8HHQsrHNDVnqio9vr_56brLiFgvvWCoOiyVYnzdYzuGI0MVNsUQ.

I would like to see the Australian government take bold leadership in addressing climate change, as well as other environmental, health and educational issues, rather than continuing its wasteful spending on defence. I look to our neighbours in New Zealand as an example of a nation that has moved away from defence exercises alongside the USA and has taken much stronger action to address climate change. I urge the Australian government to proceed in a similar manner.