



CICD Submission to the IPAN National Inquiry for an Independent & Peaceful Australia

CICD Statement in response to the IPAN inquiry which is exploring questions such as “Has our national security been damaged by our participation in conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan?” and “Should the decision to go to war in future be made by the Prime Minister alone, or by a vote of the entire Parliament?”

CICD has a long history of 62 years of campaigning for peace, independence, Nuclear Disarmament, Social justice and much more.

CICD opposes conflict, violence, and global militarisation.

It is unfortunate that we are still needing to campaign for peace and independence in the 21st Century.

The U.S. corporate media, Washington think tanks, and The Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) based in Canberra promotes conflict to deal with differences and pushes wars as a legitimate way to resolve international relations.

The ASPI was established by the Australian government, in 2001 under Prime Minister John Howard. It is partly funded by the Australian Department of Defence, domestic funding, and foreign governments such as the United State Department as well as big military contractors and industries.

ASPI's 2018-19 annual report stated that it received some funding from the Embassy of Japan, as well as from state governments and defence companies, such as Lockheed Martin, Raytheon Technologies, and other military contractors.

ASPI's main area of campaign for some years has been promotion of a cold war with China, which may change to promoting a hot war. Simply because it justifies US policy.

CICD strongly opposes that the decision to go to war is currently made by the Prime Minister alone. This **MUST** change. Such a critical commitment has to be made by a vote of the entire Parliament.

The Australian people never want to be involved in war. Politicians who push Australia into wars are not doing so in the interests of the Australian people.

The public cannot gain from and has no interest in going to war.

Experiences in Vietnam, Iraq and, especially Afghanistan have proven that wars against countries, that pose no threat, are counterproductive and pointless.

CICD opposes Australia's close military relationship with the USA.

War is hell on earth! Peaceful people are brain washed and forced into taking a side and are persuaded it is acceptable to kill in the name of a fabricated National honour, righteousness and in the belief that somehow it is required to protect their families.

How can we argue that it is valid to go war to protect security, democracy, and freedom of the people in other countries, while ignoring our treatment of indigenous people and the stolen generations, their lands, and resources?

The costs associated with ever-increasing military expenditure results in a significant reduction in funds available for Australia's social services and economic development, Health and Education and ability to address the challenge of climate change. This makes Australian families living conditions poorer and accelerates the destruction of the planet.

All this is caused by our government's "No question asked" support for the US wars.

The unilateral approach of the USA, to maintaining its political and economic dominance of the Indo-Pacific, has never been in the interests of a peaceful Australia. Bellicose military rhetoric and threats by the USA has not assisted us in the development of co-operation, or a peaceful approach to relations among all countries in the region.

Actively siding with the USA in every conflict or potential conflict in the past 20 years including U.S. wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Ukraine, and Syria have proven by every measure an absolute disaster for the peoples of these nations and for the reputation of Australia.

Australia must cancel all military agreements with the USA including, having on our lands, Pine Gap, other US basis, military exercises, and stationing of USA troops in Darwin.

Australia needs to have an independent and peaceful foreign affairs and defence policies.

We must learn how to use diplomacy effectively to develop cooperation and peaceful co-existence with all countries particularly with our neighbours.

All countries should be encouraged to adopt independent policies and measures to address the greatest threat to our peaceful coexistence and climate change around the world.

It is not a priority for Australia to become a major arms manufacturing country. It is not an acceptable way to use our expertise. Instead, we must use our considerable knowledge and expertise for the benefit of mankind not its destruction. There must be an open and clear reasons for entering into any contracts to buy or sell equipment for warfare.

Why is Australia spending 2.09% of its GDP on the military, when we are not being threatened or have identified enemies?

It would be much better and more valuable to redirect part of this spending to much needed social services, housing, Education, Health, and investments needed to address climate change.

Finally, we must campaign and get the Government to sign the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Parliament to ratifies it.