



# WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR **PEACE & FREEDOM**

THE KEY TO ACHIEVING SDG16 IS TO #MOVETHEMONEY

July 18, 2016

From 11-20 July governments are meeting for the first time to assess and review the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the [High-Level Political](#)



[Forum](#)(HLPF) at UN Headquarters in New York.

In the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 focuses on peace, justice, and strong institutions. Among other things, it aims to, “by 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime.”

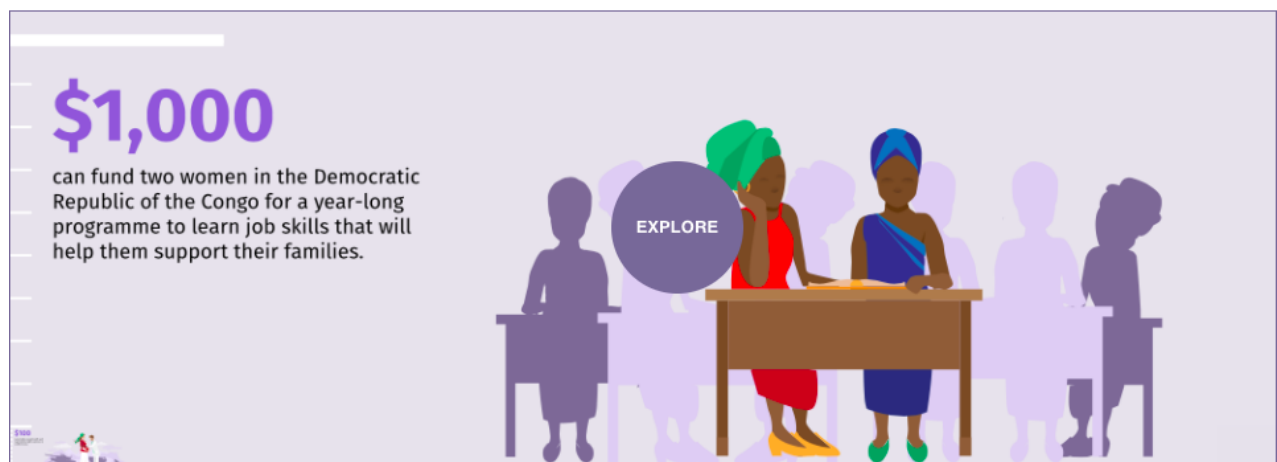
The key to achieving this goal is to address the extreme imbalance between spending on militarism and spending on disarmament, arms control, and other conflict prevention measures.

**#MOVETHEMONEY**

According to the Stockholm Institute for Peace Research (SIPRI), global military spending for 2015 totaled US \$1676 billion. This represents an increase of about 1% in real terms since 2014, the first increase since 2011.

This excessive military spending acts as a barrier to implementation of the SDGs, as resources spent on weapons are not spent on supporting social development and poverty alleviation. In fact, money spent on weapons often exacerbates challenges to development and equality.

Achieving the 17 SDGs requires further financial investments by states, but if [just 10% of the nearly \\$1.7 trillion spent on military equipment, soldiers, and wars were redirected](#) to health, education, agriculture and food security, access to modern energy, water supply and sanitation, telecommunications and transport infrastructure, ecosystems and emergency response and humanitarian work, climate change



mitigation and adaption, we would begin to see major progress on some key SDGs.

## **PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS UNDERMINES ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

In theory, the 2013 Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) regulates the legal trade of arms and commits state parties (under article 7) to evaluate the risk that the weapons could be used to commit or facilitate serious human rights violations, including gender-based violence. [Effective implementation](#) of the ATT and 2001 UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW) in all its aspects (UNPoA) can prevent gender-based violence and gender discrimination in disarmament and arms control processes. But the weakness of the

legal frameworks on arms control means that the arms trade continues to fuel the proliferation in small arms and light weapons (SALW) and other conventional weapons, threatening the lives of millions around the world every year and causing mass displacement and refugee flows.

As Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations [said](#) at the Sixth Biannual Meeting of States (BMS6) to consider implementation of the UNPoA, “The accumulation of SALW undermines economic and social development and the provision of essential services, as huge national resources are diverted from development to address the negative impact of these weapons.”

## **DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS**

In June 2016, Guy Feugap from WILPF Cameroon visited Geneva to speak at a [side event](#) on human rights and civilian access to firearms, and the links to gender-based violence at the Human Rights Council. While in Geneva, he also addressed the Civil Society Forum for the Conference on Disarmament. He highlighted the direct and indirect impact of weapons on sustainable development and gender-based violence in Cameroon, noting that “the culture of domestic violence is increasing because of the availability of firearms.”

Mr. Feugap is a schoolteacher in Cameroon. He has witnessed the direct impact of weapons on education. He said, “For example, for upcoming September when school will resume, many families are not ready to send their daughters to school because they fear for their security.”

Disarmament and development are two mutually reinforcing processes: disarmament helps create conditions favourable for development, while development creates conditions favourable for disarmament. Excessive military spending, aimed at strengthening a model national security rooted in the violent patriarchal system, is not conducive to sustainable development or the creation of human security for everyone.

For more details on #movethemoney, please see our project on [Women, Peace and Security Financing!](#)