

A Vision for A Feminist Peace

BUILDING A MOVEMENT-DRIVEN FOREIGN POLICY





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OCTOBER 2020

Key takeaways:

- » The United States is facing multiple and interrelated crises because of our capitalist and extractive economy, climate change, systemic racism, and the coronavirus pandemic. Our government has failed to adequately address these issues.
- » The militarized approach to security both domestically and internationally has not made us safe. US foreign policies of exploitation, domination, and control have not only harmed targeted communities worldwide, they are fundamentally responsible for creating the conditions we now face at home.
- » Our futures, our democracy, and all of our health and well-being — as well as core values and demands for peace and justice — depend on an urgent and radical reorientation of foreign and domestic policies. It's not enough to ask that we reduce and redress the harms perpetrated by US policy. We must center intersectional feminist principles of collective care, reparations, right relationship with people and the planet, and accountability. This requires that we envision and create policies for the good of those who have been historically oppressed and marginalized.
- » In this, we must be guided by the leadership of women and gender-nonconforming people of color, who have organized in defense of communities of color in the US and communities in the Global South — which have been targeted and harmed by US militarism. Their visions offer a way forward to the mobilizing and policy solutions we need.
- » We're calling on social movements to break out of their silos and align in action to call out the linkages between US foreign policy and domestic conditions. Unless we work together, we will never be able to take on US militarism at home and abroad, and transform our world toward peace driven by gender and racial justice.

Introduction

The killings of Black people by the police, the militarized responses to the global uprising in support of Black lives, and the negligent US government reaction to the coronavirus pandemic that has disproportionately harmed Black and brown communities reveal a fundamental truth: We are not “secure” when the United States — one of the most unequal and powerful countries in the world — chronically underfunds its public health and social welfare system¹ while spending trillions on a military that spreads violence, instability, and chaos throughout the world.²

Although US officials have framed the effort to halt the coronavirus as a “war” — healthcare workers are “on the front line” fighting an “invisible enemy,”³ and Trump has called himself a “wartime president”⁴ — this pandemic is not a war but a global health emergency that necessitates urgent international cooperation.

Now more than ever we need a radical transformation of militarized security to a system that creates genuine security. Just as the call for defunding the police is an entry point for a critical conversation on abolition, the call for defunding the military should be part of a broader discussion about global justice and transforming systems to provide care, protection, and repair for communities at home and worldwide.

As transnational feminists united against militarism and war, we call for a new US foreign policy that recognizes interdependence and

prioritizes connection and cooperation, reparations for historic and systemic harms, valuing people and the planet over profit, and protecting everyone, especially those made most vulnerable. In order to envision policies that address the root causes of war and militarism, we believe it is crucial to democratize US foreign policy by strategically connecting the concerns of US communities of color with peace and justice movements in the many countries impacted by US militarism. Central to this vision is an analysis that links domestic conditions and US foreign policies and is strongly connected to and driven by social movements, including the present uprisings for Black liberation.

Building this vision will require cross-movement dialogue that centers the voices and leadership of women of color, Indigenous Peoples, and queer and gender-nonconforming people who are committed to peace and gender, racial, and environmental justice. These perspectives and priorities have been missing from dominant discourses of foreign policy and must shape the emerging field of feminist foreign policy.

We hope this document will spark conversations to better understand what a movement-driven feminist foreign policy for peace and justice would look like and how we might turn these ideas into action.

The stakes have never been higher.

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- 1 Trust for America’s Health. (2019, April). *The Impact of Chronic Underfunding of America’s Public Health System: Trends, Risks, and Recommendations*, 2019. Trust for America’s Health.
 - 2 Amadeo, K. (2020, September 3). Why military spending is more than you think it is. *The Balance*. <https://www.thebalance.com/u-s-military-budget-components-challenges-growth-3306320/>.
 - 3 Moses, T. (2020, September 6). How talking about the coronavirus as an enemy combatant can backfire. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/how-talking-about-the-coronavirus-as-an-enemy-combatant-can-backfire-141176/>.
 - 4 *The Guardian*. (2020, March 22). ‘Invisible enemy’: Trump says he is ‘wartime president’ in coronavirus battle – video. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2020/mar/23/invisible-enemy-trump-says-he-is-wartime-president-in-coronavirus-battle-video/>.

Background

In February 2020, three organizations — Grassroots Global Justice Alliance, MADRE, and Women Cross DMZ — convened a group of 23 women and gender-nonconforming people from across the United States. Our multigenerational group included veterans, anti-war activists, Indigenous and community organizers, migrant justice organizers, political strategists, and scholars — many from diasporic communities whose homelands have been impacted by US militarism and wars. This document reflects the conversation that began and continued from there.

We came together because we are connected in our struggles against interlocking systems of power and domination — capitalism, patriarchy, white supremacy, and militarism — within and beyond the borders of the United States. We came together to examine, challenge, and reimagine a US foreign policy in the interests of all people.

Our wide-ranging discussion addressed **three main themes:**

The need to advance diplomacy and collective approaches over militarism and coercive intervention. Rather than war and other coercive actions, such as economic sanctions, as the first response to political and social crises, robust multilateral diplomatic channels must be our primary mode of engagement with the world. The goal, in the long term, is to make war and sanctions obsolete.

An intersectional, transnational, and movement-driven feminist approach to foreign and domestic policies. US foreign and domestic policies require a fundamental reset of the criteria that have long driven priorities and investments in order to repair,

redress, and undo relations of colonialism, settler-colonialism, and military intervention. This requires the meaningful inclusion and leadership of women, gender-nonconforming people, Indigenous Peoples, and people of color in shaping the policy agendas and strategies that directly and disproportionately affect them — whether they reside inside or outside our borders.

Building wider constituencies to support feminist foreign policy frameworks. While a number of states, including Canada, Mexico, and Sweden, have recently introduced feminist foreign policy frameworks — and there are growing calls for feminist foreign policy in the United States — these frameworks are compromised by corporate and militarist interests. At the same time, feminist language has been used to justify military action in the name of “protecting” women or to give policies a progressive veneer without fundamentally changing power dynamics. We want to engage with those emerging frameworks, but enacting our vision for a feminist foreign policy built on peace and justice necessitates connecting existing US-based grassroots social movements challenging US militarism at home and abroad with movements fighting for progressive, feminist change in their own societies. Without vocal and organized grassroots constituencies, progressive policy cannot be realized.

Connecting Wars at Home and Abroad

For generations, US foreign policy has been driven by and beholden to forces of militarism, imperialism, and economic exploitation in order to assert US dominance worldwide. These interests operate within domestic as well as foreign policy spheres and disproportionately impact communities of color in the US and the Global South. US foreign policy has generated violent outcomes worldwide, such as military occupations, climate catastrophe, and forced displacement, while being intertwined with systems that disproportionately criminalize, surveil, incarcerate, and kill people of color and other oppressed communities within the United States. Women and gender-nonconforming people of color have been at the forefront of these intersecting crises, experiencing their specific gendered impacts and mobilizing to defend their communities.

We see connections between US domestic and foreign policy because of this country's history as both a settler-colonial state and an imperial power. The United States was founded on the genocide of Indigenous Peoples as well as the enslavement of African peoples. Lessons learned from brutal practices on this continent have been an integral part of US colonization and imperialism abroad.⁵ Similarly, tactics and technologies used in colonized societies have been implemented domestically.⁶ These repressive systems are inextricably connected to and reinforce one another.



Black Lives Matter protests in Ohlone Territory.
Photo by Rucha Chitnis

For example, Indigenous lands within the United States have been treated as “national sacrifice zones” for the development of the country's vast nuclear and military arsenal⁷ and for resource extraction that poisons the land, water, and communities where Indigenous Peoples live. The atomic bomb, which killed hundreds of thousands of Japanese and Korean people, was first developed and detonated in New Mexico,⁸ where Indigenous communities are still affected by toxic contamination un-

5 Williams, W. (1980). United States Indian policy and the debate over Philippine annexation: Implications for the origins of American imperialism. *The Journal of American History*, 66(4), 810–831. doi:10.2307/1887638.

6 Steinmetz, K. F., Schaefer, B. P., & Henderson, H. (2017). Wicked overseers: American policing and colonialism. *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 3(1), 68–81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332649216665639>.

7 Hooks, G., & Smith, C. (2004). The treadmill of destruction: National sacrifice areas and Native Americans. *American Sociological Review*, 69(4), 558–575. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3593065/>.

8 Cramer, M. (2020, July 15). ‘Now I am become death’: The legacy of the first nuclear bomb test. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/15/us/trinity-test-anniversary.html>.

leashed during 200 nuclear tests carried out on Indigenous land between 1945 and 1962.⁹ At each stage, the responsibility to provide care and healing for communities harmed by these permutations of US militarism often falls along gender lines — for example, the Navajo mothers caring for babies with uranium in their bloodstreams¹⁰ and the women survivors of the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki¹¹ who have led the call to ban the use of nuclear weapons.

Thus, US militarism is the common thread connecting high rates of cancer plaguing Indigenous Peoples living near uranium mines in this country¹² and the people of Fallujah, Iraq,¹³ and other parts of the Pacific, Southwest Asia, and North Africa who suffer genetic damage due to the heavy use of uranium munitions in US war zones. Agent Orange was tested in US bases in Hawai'i¹⁴ and Puerto Rico¹⁵ prior to its use in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, and its storage on US bases in South Korea,¹⁶ Okinawa, and Guam¹⁷ resulted in contamination in those locations. The George W. Bush administration drew on 19th-century military precedents that framed Indigenous Peoples as disposable in creating the designation of “unlawful enemy combatant”¹⁸ ¹⁹ as part of the so-called War on Terror. This invented legal category continues to be instrumental in stripping primarily Arab people suspected of “terrorism” of their rights as detainees; they are then subjected to indefinite detention and torture in prison camps such as

Connections between US war making and policing are systemic, from the collaboration between slave patrols and militias in the past, to the militarized police tactics to suppress mass protests in support of Black lives and Standing Rock water protector encampments.

Guantanamo, where US jurisdiction embodies the history of US imperialism in the Caribbean.

US foreign policy has long operated under an “America first” national security framework, and under the Trump administration that aim of advancing US interests has been unapologetically wrapped in nationalism, unilateralism, and xenophobia.

A signature foreign policy of the Trump administration has been its “maximum pressure” strategy of imposing devastating sanctions against

9 Demarco, M. (2014, July 24). Inhabited desert: The untold story of the Trinity test. KUNM. <https://www.kunm.org/post/inhabited-desert-untold-story-trinity-test/>.

10 Hudetz, M. (2019, October 8). High concentrations of uranium found in Navajo women and babies, study shows. *USA Today*. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2019/10/08/navajo-uranium-found-women-babies-new-mexico-study/3907899002/>.

11 BBC. (2020, August 2). Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Women survivors of the atomic bombs. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-53476318/>.

12 Morales, L. (2016, April 10). For the Navajo Nation, Uranium mining's deadly legacy lingers. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2016/04/10/473547227/for-the-navajo-nation-uranium-minings-deadly-legacy-lingers/>.

13 Jamail, D. (2013, March 15). Iraq: War's legacy of cancer. Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/03/2013315171951838638.html>.

14 Keever, B. D. (2013, September 5). Remember Agent Orange: The U.S.' own chemical weapons history. Honolulu Civil Beat. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2013/09/19831-remember-agent-orange-the-us-own-chemical-weapons-history/>.

15 Pelet, V. (2016, September 3). Puerto Rico's invisible health crisis. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/09/vieques-invisible-health-crisis/498428/>.

16 Kirk, G., & Ahn, C. (2013, May 9). Agent Orange in Korea. *Foreign Policy in Focus*. https://fpif.org/agent_orange_in_korea/.

17 Mitchell, J. (2012, August 7). Poisons in the Pacific: Guam, Okinawa and Agent Orange. *The Japan Times*. <https://www.japan-times.co.jp/community/2012/08/07/issues/poisons-in-the-pacific-guam-okinawa-and-agent-orange/>.

18 Hussain, M. (2019, June 21). In Guantánamo case, U.S. government says it can indefinitely detain anyone – even U.S. citizens. *The Intercept*. <https://theintercept.com/2019/06/21/guantanamo-bay-indefinite-detention/>.

19 Byrd, Jodi A. (2011). *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*.

countries such as Iran²⁰ and North Korea.²¹ These policies have had appalling consequences for people in those countries but have failed to achieve the United States' alleged goals of denuclearization and improving human rights. With the coronavirus pandemic, sanctions have impeded the delivery of critically needed humanitarian and medical aid²² to those countries and others, such as Cuba²³ and Venezuela.²⁴

Moreover, sanctions have imposed particular gendered impacts. Women are usually the ones to provide unpaid care work to ensure food, water, and healthcare when social safety nets are decimated.²⁵ Sanctions also have disproportionate gendered effects when they target sectors in which women are commonly employed. For example, in North Korea, one of the most heavily sanctioned countries in the world, the policy disproportionately impacts women by targeting industries where they are concentrated, such as fisheries and textiles.²⁶

The deployment of lethal economic sanctions long predates the Trump administration. For example, the world-renowned public healthcare system in Cuba has been under at-

tack from decades of US sanctions.²⁷ Ironically, these aggressive policies are often framed as a nonviolent alternative to war and enacted with little pushback from the US public.

Beyond sanctions, US global dominance depends on technologies of violence that identify, contain, and eliminate populations and states considered a threat to US power. The vast and diffuse network of data sharing, police training, and mass surveillance has roots in global counterinsurgency efforts led by the United States to contain working-class and anti-colonial movements fighting for self-determination.²⁸ The same tactics of social control and repression are used within the United States²⁹ to police those perceived as threats to the social order.³⁰ These include communities of color, especially Black people, Indigenous Peoples, Muslims, migrants, and trans people, who are the most visible targets of state violence and repression in this country today.

Connections between US war making and policing are systemic, from the collaboration between slave patrols and militias in the past,³¹ to the militarized police tactics to suppress

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- 20 Jalalpour, A. (2020, January 21). The US sanctions on Iran are causing a major humanitarian crisis. *The Nation*. <https://www.thenation.com/article/world/iran-sanctions-humanitarian-crisis/>.
 - 21 Gray, K. (2019, November 26). Sanctions on North Korea are counterproductive. *Just Security*. <https://www.justsecurity.org/67473/sanctions-on-north-korea-are-counterproductive/>.
 - 22 Sarfati, A. (2020, April 27). The impact of sanctions on humanitarian response to COVID-19. IPI Global Observatory. <https://theglobalobservatory.org/2020/04/impact-of-sanctions-on-humanitarian-response-to-covid-19/>.
 - 23 Kirkpatrick, A. F. (1996). Role of the USA in shortage of food and medicine in Cuba. *The Lancet*, 348(9040), 1489–1491. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(96\)07376-x](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(96)07376-x).
 - 24 Weisbrot, M., & Sachs, J. (2020, February 24). Economic Sanctions as Collective Punishment: The Case of Venezuela. Center for Economic and Policy Research. <https://cepr.net/report/economic-sanctions-as-collective-punishment-the-case-of-venezuela/>.
 - 25 MADRE. (2020). Care-based Policies to Confront COVID-19. <https://www.madre.org/sites/default/files/PDFs/MADRE%20Care-Based%20Policy%20Recommendations%20%281%29.pdf>.
 - 26 Korea Peace Now. (2019, October). The Human Costs and Gendered Impacts of Sanctions on North Korea. <https://koreapeacenow.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/human-costs-and-gendered-impact-of-sanctions-on-north-korea.pdf>.
 - 27 Ferreiro, J. V. (2020, June 21). Cuba's two pandemics: The coronavirus and the US embargo. *Al Jazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/cuba-pandemics-coronavirus-embargo-200610120322400.html>.
 - 28 Rosen, C. (2020, March 23). From Cold War counterinsurgency to policing in Ferguson: A review of Stuart Schrader's *Badges Without Borders*. *The Metropole*. <https://themetropole.blog/2020/03/23/from-cold-war-counterinsurgency-to-policing-in-ferguson-a-review-of-stuart-schraders-badges-without-borders/>.
 - 29 Feldstein, S., & Wong, D. (2020, August 10). New technologies, new problems: Troubling surveillance trends in America. *Just Security*. <https://www.justsecurity.org/71837/new-technologies-new-problems-troubling-surveillance-trends-in-america/>.
 - 30 Renderos, S., & Sahid, R. (2019, December 16). How the government's surveillance practices criminalize communities of color [OPINION]. *Colorlines*. <https://www.colorlines.com/articles/how-governments-surveillance-practices-criminalize-communities-color-opinion/>.
 - 31 Dunbar-Ortiz, R. (2018, November 21). United States policing and "gun rights" began with slave patrols. *TruthOut*. <https://truthout.org/articles/united-states-policing-and-gun-rights-began-with-slave-patrol/>.

mass protests³² in support of Black lives³³ and Standing Rock water protector encampments.³⁴ Other examples include planned incursions of militarized Border Patrol units (BORTAC) into sanctuary cities³⁵ and the police and military training programs linking enforcement agencies in the United States, Israel,³⁶ Brazil,³⁷ and India.³⁸ Since 2001, US law enforcement has trained in Israel, indicating the increasing militarization of US police that began in the context of the Vietnam War. After the police killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014, protestors highlighted the connections between such state violence in the course of the simultaneous occupation of Ferguson and the military bombardment of Gaza that summer.³⁹ In 2020, police in many US cities responded to mass protests against the police killing of George Floyd with similar violent tactics.⁴⁰

Over the past 17 years, the United States has invested⁴¹ massively⁴² in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which manages and maintains what is now the world's largest migrant policing, imprisonment, exclusion, and deportation apparatus, operating within and beyond the United States.⁴³ Established following 9/11, the DHS has fueled Islamophobia through its multimillion-dollar surveillance programs



Korean and international women protest outside the US embassy in Seoul, South Korea, in 2018, urging the United States to make peace with North Korea. Photo by Jeehyun Kwon

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- 32 Gabbatt, A. (2020, June 6). Protests about police brutality are met with wave of police brutality across US. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jun/06/police-violence-protests-us-george-floyd/>.
- 33 Schlein, L. (2020, July 24). UN slams US security forces for violent crackdown on anti-racism protesters in Portland. *Voice of America*. <https://www.voanews.com/usa/un-slams-us-security-forces-violent-crackdown-anti-racism-protesters-portland/>.
- 34 Wong, J. C. (2017, February 23). Police remove last Standing Rock protesters in military-style takeover. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/feb/23/dakota-access-pipeline-camp-cleared-standing-rock/>.
- 35 Dickerson, C., & Kanno-youngs, Z. (2020, February 14). Border patrol will deploy elite tactical agents to sanctuary cities. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/14/us/Border-Patrol-ICE-Sanctuary-Cities.html>.
- 36 Gadzo, M. (2020, June 12). How the US and Israel exchange tactics in violence and control. *Al Jazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/06/palestinians-deadly-police-tactics-200611004902866.html>.
- 37 Gielow, I. (2020, March 4). Brazil and United States sign unprecedented military agreement. *Folha de S.Paulo*. <https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/internacional/en/world/2020/03/brazil-and-united-states-sign-unprecedented-military-agreement.shtml>.
- 38 Montague, Z. (2019, November 20). U.S.-India defense ties grow closer as shared concerns in Asia loom. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/20/world/asia/india-military-exercises-trump.html>.
- 39 Davis Bailey, K. (2018, December 17). The Ferguson/Palestine connection. *Ebony*. <https://www.ebony.com/news/the-ferguson-palestine-connection-403/>.
- 40 See supra note 36.
- 41 American Immigration Council. (2020, July 7). Fact Sheet: The Cost of Immigration Enforcement and Border Security. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/the-cost-of-immigration-enforcement-and-border-security/>.
- 42 Baldy, A. (2019, August 20). How the US exported its border around the world. *The Nation*. <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/todd-miller-new-book-empire-of-borders-interview/>.
- 43 Franco, M., & Shah, P. (2015, November 19). The Department of Homeland Security: The largest police force nobody monitors. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/nov/19/the-department-of-homeland-security-the-largest-police-force-nobody-monitors/>.



targeting Muslim and Black communities.⁴⁴ The DHS also outsources the work of deterrence and exclusion to Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.⁴⁵ These countries are expected to block people from migrating to the United States in search of safety from conditions shaped by US foreign policy, including climate chaos, displacement from their land, unemployment, and armed violence.

The factors driving migration are not gender neutral. For instance, women⁴⁶ and gender non-conforming people across Central America have been forced by brutal gender-based violence and death threats to migrate in search of safety. Not only has US foreign policy contributed to this violence — including from years of backing armed groups or regimes that used gender-based violence as a weapon of war — other US policies have compounded the threats. These include the slashing of asylum protections for survivors of domestic violence

Casey Camp-Horinek (Ponca Nation, Oklahoma) participates in the Solidarity to Solutions Week in 2018, which highlighted the need for regenerative solutions to the climate crisis to include not just decarbonization but also strategies to decolonize, detoxify, demilitarize, de-gentrify, and democratize our economies and communities. Photo by Brooke Anderson, Survival Media Agency

and the abuse of women and gender-nonconforming people in US immigration detention.

Beyond militarism, people's everyday security is undermined by racism; poverty; the criminal punishment system; the detention, deportation, and exclusion of migrant communities; and neoliberal policies that have devastated social safety nets in this country and elsewhere around the world. Meanwhile, extractive industries are destroying our planet,⁴⁷ and gender oppression and assaults on reproductive rights continue to rise.⁴⁸ Only by connecting these issues and movements will we be able to confront militarism and oppression as we build a more just, peaceful, and sustainable world.

44 Muslim Advocates. (2020, June 1). Press Release: Civil Rights and Community Groups Ask DHS to Halt Discriminatory Surveillance Grant Program. <https://muslimadvocates.org/2020/06/civil-rights-and-community-groups-ask-dhs-to-halt-discriminatory-surveillance-grant-program/>.

45 Blake, J. (2020, March 5). Briefing: The fallout of US migration policies in Mexico and Central America. *The New Humanitarian*. <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2020/02/11/US-Mexico-migration-deportation-Honduras-Guatemala-El-Salvador/>.

46 Hellerstein, E. (2018, October 8). A Triangle resident says if she's sent back to Honduras, her ex could kill her. *Indy Week*. <https://indyweek.com/news/longform/a-triangle-resident-says-if-shes-sent-back-to-honduras-her-/>.

47 Watts, J. (2019, March 12). Resource extraction responsible for half world's carbon emissions. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/mar/12/resource-extraction-carbon-emissions-biodiversity-loss/>.

48 Alvarez, P. (2020, September 15). Whistleblower alleges high rate of hysterectomies and medical neglect at ICE facility. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/15/politics/immigration-customs-enforcement-medical-care-detainees/index.html>.

Transforming the US Peace Movement

The peace movement has for decades mobilized to oppose US military interventions, bloated military budgets, and nuclear arms. But to successfully confront the multiple, complex, and escalating facets of militarism at work domestically and internationally, we must mobilize a US peace movement that is more powerful, diverse, and strategic than ever before. It will necessitate building an expansive constituency for peace that draws strength and legitimacy from the vibrant social movements active across a range of issues, from gender, racial, and climate justice to labor and Indigenous rights, and more.

Reconstituting the peace movement also requires a framework that connects the violent policies the United States projects abroad with those used within its borders to create and maintain inequality. This means being responsive to communities of color and learning from their powerful organizing, particularly by Black feminists. And it means adopting an intersectional approach internally and externally, not just by coalescing with other organizations. For generations, Black women, Indigenous women, and women of color have been on the forefront of applying this intersectional analysis. During the 1960s to the 1980s, the Third World Women's Alliance was created to challenge patriarchy in the anti-racism movement and evolved to challenge the impacts of US foreign policy and military policy on women's lives worldwide. This influential feminist, anti-militarist, internationalist framework was

carried forward by INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence.

The growth and transformation we want to see will require younger and more diverse participants, particularly in leadership positions. We must also seed new coalitions between anti-war organizations and those struggling against settler-colonialism, the criminal punishment system, the detention and deportation of migrant communities, extractive economies that are destroying our planet, gender oppression, reproductive justice, and other issues. The War Resisters' League,⁴⁹ the oldest pacifist organization in the US, has adopted a strong analysis of the impacts of racism and imperialism on militarism and counts many younger people of color in leadership roles. At the same time, communities working against the myriad expressions of US militarism domestically must build new coalitions and forge international connections across these movements, such as between the movements to defund the police and to remove US military bases overseas.

Transforming the US peace movement will also require addressing the fact that the US military disproportionately recruits young people of color. For example, Black women make up 31 percent of enlisted women, yet they are only 15 percent of the civilian population aged 18 to 44.⁵⁰ The military focuses its recruitment efforts on poor schools and funds Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) programs.⁵¹ Given the racist structure of opportunities for work and education, young people of color are

49 About Us. War Resisters League. (2020, January 2). <https://www.warresisters.org/about-us/>.

50 Patten, E. & Parker, K. (2011, December 22). A Snapshot of Active Duty Women. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewsocial-trends.org/2011/12/22/a-snapshot-of-active-duty-women/>.

51 Corcione, A. (2019, January 22). Why poor youth are targeted for military recruitment. *Teen Vogue*. <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/the-military-targets-youth-for-recruitment/>.



drawn to enlist in order to support their families, access health insurance and opportunities for education, or attain US citizenship. Thus, the military siphons off potential leaders from the very communities that would benefit most from dismantling militarism. At the same time, the first-hand experiences of people of color in the military can make them authoritative anti-war voices, as demonstrated by the veterans' group About Face.⁵²

Another exciting new anti-war group is Dissenters,⁵³ which is led by young people of color and has mobilized hundreds of young people against Trump's war with Iran through local chapters across the country. Dissenters has been particularly effective at building a narrative on how the current uprisings against police brutality are part of the same struggle against global militarism and endless wars.

On December 10, 2018, Army Captain and About Face: Veterans Against the War member Brittany Ramos DeBarros stands firm moments before her arrest at the US-Mexico border alongside hundreds of fellow military veterans, faith leaders and activists who gathered to demand that members of the so-called "migrant caravan," who traveled thousands of miles on foot seeking refuge, be admitted into the United States and an end to border militarization and violence.

Reconstituting the peace movement also requires a framework that connects the violent policies the United States projects abroad with those used within its borders to create and maintain inequality.

⁵² Who We Are. About Face. <https://aboutfaceveterans.org/who-we-are/>.

⁵³ About Us. Dissenters. (2020, January 20). <https://wearedissenters.org/about-us/>.

Shaping a Movement-Driven Feminist Foreign Policy for Peace and Justice

Feminist foreign policy frameworks adopted by Sweden, Canada, and Mexico⁵⁴ include such measures as emphasizing women and girls in development programs, advancing initiatives to counter gender-based violence, promoting gender perspectives in trade policy, and funding the participation of women in peace processes and UN peacekeeping operations.

These initiatives have created strategic openings to push for more transformative interpretations of feminist foreign policy and to develop a counterpart framework in the United States. To realize the potential of feminist foreign policy, we must maintain our expansive, justice-oriented vision of such a framework. This requires a paradigm shift in how we conceive of and create policy, which can only be achieved through strong connections to the vibrant organizing taking place in communities of color, especially around racial, economic, and climate justice, in the United States and worldwide.

The shaping of this framework must be led by women and gender-nonconforming people of color transnationally, including those who organize domestically and who may not work directly on foreign policy issues. These leaders can align the concerns of frontline US communities of color with feminist movements for peace and justice in countries impacted by US policies.

To drive this agenda, we have identified key principles that are essential for a movement-driven feminist policy:

INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM

In a society marked by deep inequalities, people are denied access to rights, resources, and power due to their gender, race, age, class,

sexuality, disability, Indigenous identity, immigration status, or other marginalized categories. Policy must recognize and redress those inequalities by:

Challenging Patriarchal Frame-

works: A feminist foreign policy must acknowledge and challenge how patriarchal assumptions underlie the militarist logic of foreign policy. This includes gendered ideas of what makes a nation secure, which justify massive military budgets, weapons of mass destruction, and endless wars. Meanwhile, priorities that focus on everyday security for people and the planet that sustains us — such as diplomacy and environmental sustainability initiatives — have been diminished and rejected, with profound consequences in this era of war, pandemic, and climate chaos.

Achieving our vision requires a collective reimagining of what security entails, how policy is made, and who is at the table when it is created. Those most affected by US policies — specifically, women, gender-nonconforming people, and people of color — must play a key role in articulating them, and policies must center the solutions and expertise they offer in order to demilitarize US policies at home and abroad.

Transforming Solidarity Politics: Recognizing how issues and oppressions interconnect offers a way to transcend categories that are used to divide us, including the separation of “domestic” and “foreign” policy. Focusing at the point of interconnection enables us to articulate a shared struggle that unites people in the US with people globally and strengthen trans-

54 Gupta, A. H. (2020, July 21). What do Sweden and Mexico have in common? A feminist foreign policy. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/21/us/sweden-feminist-foreign-policy.html>.



national movements and coalitions to confront common challenges.

A COLLECTIVE, REPARATIVE APPROACH TO FOREIGN POLICY

True human security is not possible unless we create socially just and ecologically sustainable societies. Policies must prioritize the collective health and interdependence of the planet over profits. In an era of COVID-19, this means seeking a recovery that does not simply return us to “normal” but that lays a foundation for a regenerative anti-racist feminist economy that prioritizes caring, equity, sustainability, and being in right relationship with nature and people. Furthermore, we must assert US foreign policy as a vehicle for redressing the historic injustices that have produced today’s global crises. This vision

In Tahrir Square, Egypt, women protesters call for the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak in 2012. The United States backed Mubarak’s authoritarian rule for 30 years with \$2 billion annually through US military aid and CIA secret prisons, which were used to murder, torture, and indefinitely detain critics of the regime. Photo by Gigi Ibrahim

The shaping of this framework must be led by women and gender-nonconforming people of color transnationally, including those who organize domestically and who may not work directly on foreign policy issues.



Delegation from Grassroots Global Justice Alliance and National Domestic Workers Alliance participate in the 2019 Women's March in Washington, DC.

would take justice and reparation as a guiding ethic, committing to taking actions that reverse and repair harms perpetrated by US actions and that operate on a promise to do no future harm. The following fundamental principles must be at work in this vision:

Care and Collectivism: A feminist moral framework rooted in collective care centers policies that guarantee basic needs like housing, childcare, healthcare, and education, which are universal rights enshrined in international law. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the stark necessity of recognizing the fundamental importance of care work, who does it, and how it is compensated. We must prioritize policy frameworks that are guided by a collective care ethic rather than those that deny our interdependence and allow governments to shirk their legal obligations.

This approach links seemingly separate issues — for example, the largely unrecognized value of domestic work, abuses like family separation and economic sanctions, and the need for increased funding for global health initiatives and humanitarian aid. Using this framework, we can also develop policy responses that recognize past US harm and begin to make amends — like unprecedented commitments to climate finance and welcoming in migrants seeking refuge from war and climate disaster.

Just Relations with Indigenous Peoples: Unequivocal, material solidarity with Indigenous Peoples must be a core aspect of feminist, anti-militarist, internationalist work in the United States as a way to redress historic and ongoing harms inflicted by military occupation of sovereign Peoples' lands. US movements must act in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples across the world fighting authoritarian regimes, particularly those with strong links to the United States, such as in Brazil and the Philippines. We must also recognize the centrality of the values espoused by global Indigenous organizing — such as the need to live in right relationship with each other and with the planet — as fundamental to policy approaches.

Confronting Racism: In this moment of extraordinary protest and social movement organizing in defense of Black lives, we uphold that anti-racism must be a fundamental tenet of a truly feminist US foreign policy. In particular, we recognize the role that systemic, state-sanctioned white supremacy has played, not only in perpetuating abuse and injustice against Black and brown communities domestically, but also in driving dehumanizing and exploitative US policy actions worldwide.

Strategic Approaches

WE MUST REJECT THE FAILED STATUS QUO, INCLUDING BY:

Defunding the military, police, jails, prisons, and detention centers and closing the US military's massive network of roughly 1,000 bases around the world.⁵⁵ This also requires measures to stop the privatization of the military and end war profiteering. It means opposing new nuclear weapons and new nuclear tests. We call for the repeal of policies such as the Authorization for Use of Military Force (AUMF), which gives a blank check for US military interventions, and we urge the United States to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Mine Ban Treaty.

Organizing against US military intervention in all its forms, including when it is presented as humanitarianism. In Afghanistan, for example, the United States justified its intervention as necessary to “save” Muslim women from the Taliban, with no recognition that decades of war were responsible for creating the conditions that eroded Afghan women’s rights.⁵⁶ We must also resist efforts to further normalize militarism, especially as the United States seeks to enlarge the role of its military by deploying it in response to crises, as was done after Hurricane Katrina⁵⁷ and the Fukushima disaster.⁵⁸

Opposing sanctions and other forms of economic coercion to pursue policy goals. Economic sanctions endanger the lives of ordinary people, particularly the most vulnerable. We must also condemn the use of aid funding to leverage cooperation with the United States’ global system of surveillance and military security.

WE MUST FURTHER HONE AND IMPLEMENT A PROACTIVE STRATEGY TO ACHIEVE OUR FEMINIST, ANTIMILITARIST VISION, INCLUDING BY:

Investing in collective care to provide human security. This means ensuring that everyone has access to safe housing, adequate childcare, free healthcare and education, and a clean environment. It includes ensuring asylum rights and providing settlement support for migrants. It requires the United States to make long-term proactive investments that focus on conflict prevention and building peace. And it means transitioning from unfettered capitalism to a regenerative feminist economy that prioritizes sustainability and protecting the environment.

Generating US accountability to standards of human rights and international law. The human rights framework provides an established toolkit useful to

55 Slater, A. (2018, January 25). The US has military bases in 80 countries. All of them must close. *The Nation*. <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/the-us-has-military-bases-in-172-countries-all-of-them-must-close/>.

56 Stout, D. (2001, November 18). Mrs. Bush cites women’s plight under Taliban. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2001/11/18/us/a-nation-challenged-the-first-lady-mrs-bush-cites-women-s-plight-under-taliban.html>.

57 Steichen, L. (2020, September 3). 15 years after Hurricane Katrina, it’s time to demilitarize disaster relief. *Common Dreams*. <https://www.commondreams.org/views/2020/09/03/15-years-after-hurricane-katrina-its-time-demilitarize-disaster-relief/>.

58 Fukushima, A. I., Kirk, G., Ginoza, A., Hase, M., Lee, D., & Shefler, T. (2014, March 19). Disaster militarism: Rethinking U.S. relief in the Asia-Pacific. *Foreign Policy in Focus*. <https://fpif.org/disaster-militarism-rethinking-u-s-relief-asia-pacific/>.

progressive foreign and domestic policymaking and to social movement efforts to pull the US back from the brink of authoritarianism. To achieve this, we must push for a reinvestment in multilateral diplomatic spaces and call for the United States to sign, ratify, and comply with international treaties, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. We recognize that human rights are a living framework that must grow to confront current crises and evolve to embrace new rights, from the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples to more expansive gender protections that include LGBTIQ people.

Taking actions that reverse and repair centuries of harm caused by US invasion, colonialism, settler-colonialism, and military intervention. We call for policies rooted in historical analyses that account for legacies of extractivism and settler-colonialism, war making, and exploitation. We must take responsibility for the role that US foreign policy has played historically in destabilizing and displacing communities worldwide. The US military, for example, as one of the largest emitters of carbon, has worsened the climate crisis.⁵⁹ With this lens, we can clearly see the imperative for a redistribution of wealth and resources away from the military budget to fund reparations, diplomacy, and a just transition for communities affected by US militarism and exploitation, domestically and around the world. Examples include reparations to Indigenous and Black Peoples within the United States, major increases to climate finance, ending the militarization of borders and military occupations by US bases, and welcoming immigrants and refugees while redressing the wrongs that result in forced migration.

Supporting women, gender-nonconforming people, and communities of color. A movement-driven foreign

We seek to articulate and advance a genuinely progressive and feminist US foreign policy embodied through principles and frameworks rooted in the intersection of transnational movements for peace and racial, economic, migrant, and climate justice.

policy for peace and justice must center the impact of war and militarism on women, gender-nonconforming people, and communities of color in the United States and around the world. We uphold the principle of bodily autonomy, recognizing that the bodies of women and gender-nonconforming people are treated as territories of war and are subject to sexual violence and exploitation. For example, we must confront efforts to advance a misogynist agenda abroad, such as through the Global Gag Rule, which blocks funding for abortion and other essential reproductive health care,⁶⁰ knowing that these attacks are mirrored domestically. This also means supporting policies that address sexual violence, improve women's health, and guarantee reproductive justice.

In summary, we seek to articulate and advance a genuinely progressive and feminist US foreign policy embodied through principles and frameworks rooted in the intersection of transnational movements for peace and racial, economic, migrant, and climate justice.

59 Neimark, B., Belcher, O., & Bigger, P. (2019, June 25). U.S. military produces more greenhouse gases than up to 140 countries. *Newsweek*. <https://www.newsweek.com/us-military-greenhouse-gases-140-countries-1445674/>.

60 The devastating impact of Trump's global gag rule. (2019). *The Lancet*, 393(10189), 2359. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736\(19\)31355-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0140-6736(19)31355-8).

Conclusion

We are living through a moment of historic upheaval, with the potential for truly transformational change. The pandemic, the economic crisis, rising authoritarianism, and the pivotal 2020 US presidential election are forcing a widespread reckoning.

In this moment, a profusion of political, economic, and public health crises has created openings for new articulations of foreign policy. Our movements have an opportunity — and an obligation — to collectively articulate a movement-driven feminist foreign policy for peace and justice in order to realize a future where every living being may thrive and where the planet is recognized as the sustainer of all life. To reorient US foreign policy away from perpetual war and domination and toward interdependence and cooperation will take a broad, diverse coalition with a clear analysis that links domestic conditions and US foreign policies, and will require a joint commitment to the struggle for self-determination and liberation.

By mobilizing ourselves and our communities, we can democratize US foreign policy, not only for our collective security here at home, but for the future of all peoples and our planet.

Acknowledgements

This framework document would not have been possible without the collective thinking and visioning of the 23 women and gender non-conforming leaders who came together in February 2020 at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund Pocantico Center in New York. We would like to thank the following individuals whose time and talent made this a truly movement document.

Christine Ahn, Women Cross DMZ

Mizue Aizeki, Immigrant Defense project

Medea Benjamin, Code Pink

**Phyllis Bennis, Institute for Policy Studies
– New Internationalism Project**

Linda Burnham, Author and Activist

**Jazmín Delgado, Center for
Political Education**

Diana Duarte, MADRE

Noura Erakat, Rutgers University

Adom Getachew, University of Chicago

Chung-Wha Hong, Grassroots International

Catherine Killough, Women Cross DMZ

Helen Kim, Consultant

Akhila Kolisetty, MADRE

Hyun Lee, Women Cross DMZ

**Thenjiwe McHarris, Blackbird,
Movement for Black Lives (M4BL)**

**Nadine Naber, University of Illinois
and Mamas Activating Movements for
Abolition and Solidarity (MAMAS)**

**Cynthia Oka, formerly with Grassroots
Global Justice Alliance**

**Brittany Ramos DeBarros, About
Face – Veterans Against the War**

**Kathleen Ok-soo Richards,
Women Cross DMZ**

Sima Shakhari, University of Minnesota

Tasia Ahuja Smith, Consultant

Yifat Susskind, MADRE

**Cindy Wiesner, Grassroots
Global Justice Alliance**

**Sunyoung Yang, Grassroots
Global Justice Alliance**

Janene Yazzie, Sixth World Solutions

*** Gwyn Kirk, Women for Genuine Security
(was not at the Pocantico meeting but
provided substantial edits to the document)**

**** Kate Kizer, Win Without War (was not at
the Pocantico meeting but is serving as an
advisor to the Feminist Peace Initiative).**

We thank the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Women's Rights Program of the Open Society Foundations, Grassroots International, and Compton Foundation for their support of this groundbreaking initiative.

