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Militarization

From the "12-day war" to the NATO and EU summits: A leap forward in militarisation, under the orders of Trumpism

- Features -

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“As the English historian Edward P. Thompson points out, nuclear war is not only imaginable, but has already been imagined and carried out twice, against the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The unimaginable, says Thompson, seems to be that this happens to us, but not that we inflict it on others.” Manuel Sacristán, “The Danger of a War with Nuclear Weapons.” *El País*, January 16, 1983

NATO's joint declaration, signed on June 25 at its meeting in The Hague, shortly after the 12-day war against Iran, confirmed the subordination of the European powers—led by Great Britain, Germany, and France—to the Trumpist strategy of remilitarising Europe within a global framework of inter-imperialist competition and the Transatlantic bloc's shared responsibility for the genocide that the State of Israel continues to perpetrate against the Palestinian people.

Furthermore, the summit took place after the aggression launched first, by Israel and then by the United States, against Iran, resorting to the well-known argument that the Iranian regime was producing nuclear weapons, as was the case in 2003 with Iraq. Once again, both countries have waged an illegitimate and illegal war under international law, supported by their European allies, once again invoking, in their classic Orwellian language, the "legitimate right to defense"... of the aggressor states, both of which possess nuclear weapons. The current Secretary General of NATO, Mark Rutte, has stood out in his congratulations for this attack, whose level of servility and flattery to Trump, pledging that “Europe will pay BIG, as it should, and it will be its victory,” seems to know no bounds. [\[1\]](#)

Beyond the questionable triumphalism of the US leader over the results of his attack on Iran, in light of even official reports questioning whether he has destroyed Iranian uranium enrichment and storage facilities, what seems clear is that the possibility of a resumption of these attacks in a geostrategically key area—as it is also for China—will continue to be a permanent threat, especially from Netanyahu, determined to impose himself by force as the dominant power in the region.

The difference with what happened in 2003 is that while France and Germany then opposed the Azores trio (Bush, Blair, and Aznar) in the war against Iraq, their current leaders have now displayed a shameful and outrageous acceptance of the role of vassals to those who continue to consider them commercial competitors. Macron had to cynically acknowledge this when he stated that "we cannot, among allies, say that we have to spend more and wage a trade war; it's an aberration."

The most important point of the Hague Declaration was undoubtedly the agreement to increase total spending by 5% of GDP, broken down between defense spending in the strict sense: 3.5%, and critical infrastructure, cybersecurity, and other spending: 1.5% by 2035, to be reviewed in 2029. This would mean an additional €510 billion per year for European countries, which would obviously lead to a further crackdown on social spending in essential areas such as healthcare, education, pensions, and long-term care, and, as we are seeing in almost every country, would lead to neglecting the fulfillment of such a fundamental right as the right to decent housing.

Only Pedro Sánchez has attempted to distance himself from the agreement, relying on the NATO Secretary General's ambiguously assumed flexibility that, in this case, it could be limited to 2.1% of annual GDP. [\[2\]](#) In this way, he tries to convince them that this percentage will be sufficient to meet the military capabilities objectives that NATO demands of the Spanish State. However, it remains a commitment to increased military spending that, despite the irritation it has caused Trump, is equally open to criticism and, moreover, is nothing more than a cosmetic resource for internal use to neutralise the discontent of its partners in the Spanish government [\[3\]](#), since its signing of the declaration and its insistence that it remains a "reliable partner" in NATO confirm that it shares the same militaristic

project as its allies. [\[4\]](#)

Added to all this is the lack of any criticism from the Spanish government regarding the use the US has made of the Rota and Morón bases for its attack on Iran. This makes the Spanish State complicit in the illegitimate and illegal war waged against that country and serves as a reminder of the fraud represented by the promise to comply with one of the clauses that Felipe González's government included in the 1986 referendum to obtain a "Yes" vote, which would proceed with the "progressive reduction of the United States military presence in Spain." Not only has this been maintained, but its expansion in the case of Rota has continued under the governments of Rodríguez Zapatero and Pedro Sánchez.

Towards greater militarisation and nuclearisation of capitalism on a global scale

Without a doubt, the great beneficiary of the leap forward in the militarisation of Europe will be the US military-industrial complex (from which European armies purchase 64% of their weapons). Although Great Britain and France are major military and nuclear powers, they will not be sufficient to meet the needs that European countries will face in the coming years to meet the objectives set out in this declaration.

However, other important aspects of this declaration have gone unnoticed. Perhaps the most relevant is in point 1, where, as some media outlets have observed, and despite the usual rhetoric about the values the Western bloc claims to defend, on this occasion, any mention of the defense of human rights and the rule of law is missing. An absence that does not seem accidental, since it is difficult to conceal that practically all the signatory states, with the United States, Turkey, and Hungary leading the way, are not immune from violating these principles. It is therefore not surprising that the EU, at its meeting following the NATO summit, postponed its decision on whether to suspend the Association Agreement with the State of Israel. [\[5\]](#)

Another controversial aspect is the reference to NATO's Article 5 in the declaration. Even before the meeting, we saw this article being questioned by Trump himself, who has not hesitated to clarify that the commitment to solidarity with any attacked country expressed therein can be open to different interpretations. Something that could serve as a pretext in the future to disengage from conflicts that don't fit with its own geostrategic interests in Europe (where it continues to maintain a significant military presence) or, as it has already hinted more than once, with its own intentions regarding Greenland...

The statement predictably denounces "the long-term threat posed by Russia to Euro-Atlantic security," though without any mention of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It does, however, reaffirm its "sovereign and enduring commitment to supporting Ukraine." A relative change of tone confirms that it is not democracy and human rights that drive NATO in the region, but rather its geostrategic interests.

In short, the MAGA leader emerges victorious from this summit: he has shifted responsibility for future conflicts in Europe to his allies so that the US can focus its attention on the Indo-Pacific region against China; he has guaranteed significant profits for his country's military industry and has helped stem the divisions within his ranks caused by his direct involvement in the Middle East with the attack on Iran... until the next crisis.

However, Trump's success in imposing his objectives at this summit does not guarantee any significant progress in his project to transform the old global order and halt its decline as a major hegemonic power. A decline that continues to manifest itself on various fronts and that Trump seeks to counter with a short-termism that continues to fail to yield the results hoped for by the interclass social bloc that brought him to power. Good proof of this is that the

conflicts he said he would resolve in a few weeks, whether the Russian invasion of Ukraine or Israel's against the Palestinian people and now against Iran—where he even sought regime change—threaten to drag on.

This leap forward also occurs in a global context of "significant economic slowdown to the point of stagnation, coupled with still relatively high inflation; a crippling debt burden for the majority of the world's earning population; and an accelerating climate crisis". [6] A set of challenges in the face of which the militarism advocated by Trump and the main leaders of the Western bloc only represents a flight forward that will in turn stimulate the rearmament of other large and medium-sized powers in their respective regional areas, always with the risk of nuclear escalation in any conflict involving any of the states possessing these weapons of mass destruction. Trump's cynical vindication of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki should be enough to make us take seriously the historic crossroads we have reached.

A militarism that, thanks to the technological advances represented by Artificial Intelligence, turns military-industrial systems into a fundamental instrument of a new phase of capitalist accumulation, as well as a culture of security and surveillance that is spreading throughout the world and that, as Claude Serfati [7] rightly denounces, may end up being as dangerous as wars for the social majority.

So, while we are aware that we are in difficult conditions to launch a counteroffensive from below against this set of threats, it is urgent to build and expand the unified platforms that are being formed to prevent this new leap forward. It is now a question of addressing this task beyond short-termism through sustained, international mobilisation in solidarity with Palestine and all the peoples under attack, whether in Ukraine, the Middle East, Africa, or anywhere else in the world, placing them within a horizon of breaking with militarism and advocating for the dissolution of NATO and the denuclearisation of the planet.

These campaigns should be coordinated with those that must be developed in all areas where we have to challenge the dominant framework of security discourses by opposing them with a multidimensional concept that aims to guarantee the sustainability of a dignified life on a habitable planet. [8]

28 June 2025

Translated by David Fagan for **International Viewpoint** from [vientosur](#).

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[1] To which he added phrases like this: "You are going to achieve what NO other American president has achieved in decades."

[2] Although we do know that, as the Delàs Centre for Peace Studies has criticised, there are items related to these expenses that are not usually included in that section.

[3] On this I refer to the article by Mario Espinosa in *Viento Sur*, 06/25/2025

[4] On the other hand, there is no guarantee that this flexibility will be respected in the coming years, given the precarious position Sánchez has found himself in at the Moncloa Palace since the outbreak of the corruption scandal known as the Santos Cerdán case, the extent of which

remains to be seen depending on the new chapters that may emerge in the coming weeks.

[5] It's true that Pedro Sánchez demanded the suspension of this agreement at the recent EU meeting, but this contrasts with the continued arms trade with Israel, in contrast to the demand for a "comprehensive embargo" from more than 500 organisations, as is currently the situation in a recent case.

[6] Michael Roberts, "De las Montañas rocosas a Estocolmo: el G-7 ignora la crisis global", sinpermiso, 16/06, 2025.

[7] "Les systèmes militaro-industriels pourraient représenter des noyaux totalitaires de notre société", interview by Hélène Marra and Nicolas Menna with Claude Serfati, Inprecór, 733, June 2025, p. 16. Also, by the same author, "Más destructivo y más rentable: el emplazamiento de Trump al sistema militar-industrial de EE UU", viento sur, 27/05/25

[8] To specify the objectives to be achieved in this commitment, the article by Tom Kucharz, "Diez alternativas a una seguridad militarizada", El Salto, 06/20/25, is of interest.