

The Economics of Killing

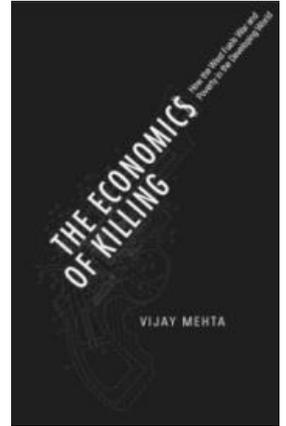
How the West Fuels War and Poverty in the Developing World

Book Discussion Speech

VIJAY MEHTA [vijay@vmpeace.org]

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Introduction

Hello and welcome to the book discussion. It's a privilege and an honour to address you all as your courageous actions are a driving force for all the changes taking place in our world.

In my talk I'm going to not only explore core message and main themes of the book, but also facts which are conveniently missed by the many mainstream media and lift the curtain on truths many leaders, military and elites prefer concealed. Also how can we non-violently bring changes in our world ending wars and conflicts for a safer and peaceful future for all. It is a controversial book and please allow me to present my view point and the way I see and understand the world. I look forward to your challenges in the Q/A session.

Reasons for Writing the Book

The reasons for writing the book *The Economics Of Killing* are threefold:

Firstly, will there be an alternative social evolution of our species towards peace without domination that might someday eliminate war (which is politically organised violent crime perpetrated by warmongers and controlled by war making lobbies) and standing armies from our present military mindset.

We are programmed and conditioned, like computers - we are Catholics, Protestants, Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Hutus and Tutsis and so on. One of the consequences has been hatred, or war, or separating yourself from others. Only when we are able to break the pattern of confrontation and free our minds from the conditional mental slavery then we will be able to provide the way for compassion and love for one another.

Secondly, is there a way we can put people before profit and thus have growth and reduce inequality without exploitation which is the modus operandi of the capitalists who are the cause of the most of the problems including violence facing the world today.

Thirdly, to tell the truth about militarism and have the courage and fearlessness to confront and launch actions to stop our world becoming dangerously militarised. The global military spending in 2012 stands at \$1.75 trillion, which is about 2.5% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) while 2.6 billion people live on \$2 a day and 925 million people go to bed hungry every night. The UN Secretary General Ban ki Moon has rightly observed, "The world is over armed and peace is underfunded."

The cold war has been over for more than two decades, yet the world continues on an insane path to increase its military spending year after year as if we are living in a time of unending conflict. More problematic and the biggest threat to humanity, is the fact that by over-arming ourselves in the West and Asia, we end up repeating the horrors and the bloodshed of 20th century in which 250 wars were fought and 160 million lives were lost. The sad thing is that the 21st century, up to now is going the same way.

Scaremongering and Hate that Turns Humans into Militants

By the end of the cold war, from various research works published in the 1990s, we now know how armament firms have regularly spread false rumours about the military and naval programs of various states, engaged in scaremongering, played one country off against another, influenced public opinion on armament through control of media and formed powerful arms cartels to promote a global arms race.

Same can be said about individuals. A culture of authority and obedience that supplants individual moral responsibility with loyalty to a larger mission helps loosen the moral inhibition against murder, social psychologists say.

But perhaps the most important ingredient is the dehumanization of the victims, said David Livingstone Smith, professor of philosophy at the University of New England and author of "Less Than Human: Why We Demean, Enslave, and Exterminate Others."

"Thinking about your enemies in subhuman categories is a way of creating a mental distance, of excluding them from the human family," he said. "It makes murder not just permissive but obligatory. We should kill vermin or predators."

The Hutus in Rwanda called the Tutsis cockroaches, the Nazis depicted the Jews as rats. Japanese invaders referred to their Chinese victims during the Nanjing massacre as "chancorro," or "subhuman." American soldiers fought barbarian "Huns" in World War I and godless "gooks" in Vietnam.

Armed Conflict and Unethical World

Each year, armed conflict kills an estimated 200,000 people. The current proxy/civil war in Syria, for example, has resulted in over 120,000 deaths so far with no end in sight. Millions more suffer directly or indirectly from violence, which destroys livelihoods and displaces communities. The victims of war and rape are never calculated in the statistics of war victims. Wars now kill more civilians than soldiers.

What is also not counted among the dead are mercenaries or military personnel hired through private contractors. Privatising the military has become a profitable business for some companies and it has become an industry itself. Halliburton (US Corporation) made \$26 billion from Iraq war.

The damages of war go beyond what we once believed. Society has now reached an understanding about the colossal cost of moral, financial, communal and psychological toll wars can have on soldiers, their family, community and even country.

How can a society be called civilised if it has an international arms/killing industry which leads to wars, violence, barbarism, to counterproductive military budgets destroying social, economic, political and cultural fabric and values?

War is Wealth: Violence Costs World Economy 11% of Global GDP

Violence is prevalent in the form of murder, abuse assault, rebellion, armed conflict and war. The cost of violence to the global economy in 2012 is estimated at \$9.46 trillion which is equivalent to 11% of global GDP. The war in Afghanistan alone have already cost British taxpayers £37 billion - £2,000 for every UK household.

780 million guns are in circulation world wide and 5 to 6 million are manufactured on a yearly basis. For example, for a population of 300 million, US have 300 million guns. Mass Shootings in US occur every 4 to 6 weeks.

The US obsession with wars and military spending has created a monster – the military-industrial complex – which acts against the interests of people everywhere, including US citizens themselves. My book, *The Economics of Killing* shows how this monster is not only the cause of extreme poverty in the developing world, but contributed to 911 and the market crash of 2008. How the world can move away from the war economy to a sustainable peace economy based on soft power and co-operation, so we can tackle the biggest threats facing humanity: extreme poverty, climate change and warmongering. We need to explore nonviolent ways for building peace and restoring human dignity, ethics and civilisation, reflected in a new initiative 4D for World Peace inspired by my book – 4D standing for Disarmament, Demilitarisation, Development and Democracy.

The 4D for World Peace Campaign offers a choice: continue on the same destructive path of war economy, greed and competition based on market forces and suffer even more – or build a safer and fairer way of life.

Military Industrial Complex and the Damage Done by it

Military Industrial Complex (MIC) broadly includes science, technology, industry and military. Thousands of firms small and large have emerged to equip the military with weapons. MIC comprises of manufacturers of military technologies, dual use systems (from computer and software to fuel cells, lasers, robotic arms and optical equipment used both for civil and military purposes that commands astronomical prices in overseas markets) and industries deemed to be strategically important. It also includes the arms trade, illegal and legal.

MIC includes 25 million soldiers worldwide America's defence department is the world's biggest employer with 3.2 million people on its payroll. China, a big military spender employs 2.3 million in its armed forces. The MIC includes spying, surveillance and intelligence gathering centres and 1000 military bases spread around the world in 183 countries. United States is the only country in the world with thousand military bases with missile systems, nuclear systems, aimed at anybody inciting or if there is a problem. It is to protect rich people who are often referred to living in a nanny state and large part of military system is making sure that the rich are protected.

Weapon manufacturers of small arms (8 million in circulation), cluster bombs, missiles, landmines, military tanks, ships, fighter jets, nuclear weapons (approx. 22,000 in stock), chemical and biological weapons and newly introduced automated flying global killer drones (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) much more are part of the complex Military Apparatus.

Development of robotic warfare is the most dangerous military technology since the making of the Atom Bomb. If drone attacks were able to put an end to terrorism, we would have already got rid of terrorists in countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan Iraq and recently in Kenya

Some examples of damage done by Military Industrial Complex (MIC) are:

a) Rise in militarism and conflicts leading to millions of deaths and untold suffering

The culture of militarism, blind obedience of soldiers, and reverence for military is prevalent in all societies throughout recent history from the Greek state of Sparta, to the Roman Empire to British Empire to the Soviet Union. Hollywood glamorises military. Judiciary and political leaders find it dangerous to oppose militarism. Even worse, if politicians and media do not support the war, they are accused of not supporting the troops.

Obsession with wars and military spending since WW2 from Vietnam, Korean wars, Cold War and the present Iraq and Afghanistan war has killed millions of people, brought untold violence and suffering to civilians and taken the world in the direction of anarchy and disorder.

It has created a war economy in which biggest industries heavily subsidised by the US tax payer have become arms manufacturers alongside civilian output, e.g. Boeing, General Electric, Honeywell, Lockheed Martin and UK's BAE (British Aerospace). In most countries the war economy has a vested interest in continuing wars and so have an undesirable influence on its foreign policy .

b) Oppression of developing countries & forced transfer of resources from poor to rich

Today's wars are about gaining control of resources and influence. The corrupt practices by rich nations of extraction of resources like diamond, copper, coltan, oil etc. on unequal basis from poor countries leaves them

impoverished without any wealth to kick start the reconstruction and development of their countries. Militarism is the key driver of economics of underdevelopment.

This extreme poverty is the cause of over two billion people subsisting on less than \$2 a day. Every 3.6 seconds, a person dies of starvation. Every 30 seconds, a child dies of malaria. Every minute a woman dies in childbirth, a genocide of neglect and abandonment. One is reminded of the quotation of Former US President Dwight Eisenhower who said and I quote, *“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in a final sense a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed”*

c) Violence, Terrorism and War on Terror

Power, elite, rulers control, dominate and legitimise violence by creating fear in the masses like the war on terror, which gives the military a reason for increasing its military spending. The wartime mindset of intelligence services turns out to be a self serving exercise.

Islamist terrorism is provoked by the West's wars, a reason which is rarely discussed. Al Qaeda is the manifestation of the anger and humiliation of people living under puppet regimes. Irony is MIC trained Al Qaeda operatives, Iraqi insurgents and Mujahidin's in unconventional warfare (guerrilla warfare) at Fort Bragg, the US Army John F Kennedy Warfare Centre, North Carolina, USA. Moreover, war on terror is pure and simple rhetorical and has no constitutional standing with what happens in real wars.

d) 2008 financial collapse and current economic crisis

One of the main reasons of the financial crisis is the retrograde mode of capitalism which is accumulation of wealth and self glorification as it has lost its progressive mission of a compassionate and caring society. We live not in a democracy but an oligarchy (rule of the few rich) where most of the decisions that affect us are taken by people who are rarely subject to checks and restraints that inhibits the ordinary citizens over whom we have not the faintest control. There is no accountability in this system

- The huge financial cost of militarism is the key factor in the crisis of capitalism. War is extremely expensive, not only in money but human capital and potential.
- USA have financed wars by inflation, raising the debt limit and creating trade and fiscal deficits. According to a recent Harvard University Report, the cost to US taxpayer of the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan is estimated at \$4 trillion - \$6 trillion which US cannot afford and which plunged US and West into massive debt and financial crisis. Britain itself is experiencing the human and economic cost of Afghanistan war today.
- It was China that provided US with its seemingly endless quantities of cheap credit which left huge amount of liquidity in western markets resulting in low interest rates and unwise lending of loans by bankers leading to a market crash.
- Banks were responsible in a major way for the global financial crisis from which they profited. When they got in to trouble, the governments of US, UK and others, stepped in to bail them while knowing that this happened because of the unethical and greedy behaviour of the banks themselves. To pay for these bailouts many states decided to slash social expenditure even as the banks resumed the payment of multi-million dollar bonuses to their staff.

e) Marginalisation of United Nations and Weakening of World INSTITUTIONS

More and more decisions are being taken outside UN by powerful countries. MIC Time and again created hysteria for countries, especially the US and its allies to go to war without proper UN mandate or authorisation. Like the US invasion of Iraq, Afghanistan and Yugoslavia which side lined the UN as a result. Similarly, World

Bank and International Monetary Fund are controlled by powerful vested interests – a situation that compromises our security and undermines democracy.

f) Start of a new Cold War in Europe and Asia

Obama's administration is involved in strengthening US military build up, dramatically expand its air force and build alliances and partnerships in so called 'pivot to Asia' policy which is directed to contain rising power of China. The idea behind the pivot is to encircle China with US and allied forces, just like the west did to the Soviet Union back in the cold war.

g) Negative effects on environment, global and human security including refugees, migrants etc.

The environmental risks of nuclear contamination leaks are already well known like Chernobyl, 3 mile Island and recent Fukushima disaster.

What is not well known is the pollution created by US military which is the world's single largest user of petroleum. Each year it consumes more energy than Nigeria, one of the world's major oil producers.

h) Control of information, secrecy and surveillance society

The global surveillance system to control information in an organised way is so much bigger than the big brother – spying on its citizens – secretly, comprehensively and virtually without accountability.

Security assessments given by US and European intelligence gathering agencies always highlight new threats with the purpose of starting new conflicts and wars as it benefits them to keep business as usual thus keeping themselves in a job and also increasing the manufacture, sale and profits of weapon manufactures.

i) Moral bankruptcy of warmongers, biased reporting and false propaganda

The mantra of media reporting on wars is – if it bleeds, it leads, and hence conflicts are glorified. Wars are not heroic, they are bloody, terrifying and destructive. But most of the mainstream media is subservient to the establishment and turns a blind eye to truth and justice. Hijacking and influencing of media continues in falsifying the facts and untruthful reporting of the facts. It is evident from the war on Iraq, when media in cahoots with leaders and governments of US and UK, propagated false stories about a humanitarian war and non-existent weapons of mass destruction. The practical alternatives to war are ignored.

j) Use of Science, latest technology and research in universities to develop satanic weapons

Misuse of brain power i.e. the tendency of science/engineering/technology to be put at the service of the military system rather than human needs is not only deplorable but encourages militarism.

Universities and students are now becoming incubators for corporate employers and cheap laboratories for war making machine and private sector patents. The forces of technology, globalisation and wealth are exercising the authority in cooperation with governments nowadays. 17 of the UK's most prestigious universities including Imperial college London, Cambridge and Oxford received a total of £83 million over the 3 years up to until 2011 for military research, thus increasing the military influence in schools and universities. It is unfortunate, we live in a world where military research takes up 30% of global R&D resources, which is 10 times more than medical research and what food research receives.

k) MIC Giving powers to military alliance NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) to police the world and fight its wars

NATO is a tool following the agenda of US and its allies of global military dominance. And it is not bringing peace and security, but dangerous instability in the world. NATO is building its missile defence programs in European bases, aimed at Russia. Outside Europe, NATO is expanding its influence from the Mediterranean to the Pacific with enormous cost. NATO is the military wing of a political and economic free market globalisation agenda which by force is harming the economies of the developing world.

Elites Losing Control

However, there are hopeful signs on the horizon as we may be witnessing the tipping point in history when the elites could not hold to power anymore as concerned citizens are using critical thinking to analyze things for themselves and find the truth. It seems likely that elites rule over humanity is rapidly diminishing, and thus a window of opportunity is wide open for changing the status quo. Over the last decade the global elite have been on a mad rush to consolidate power over the world, as capitalism has brought deepening economic crisis.

Here are signs below that the elite are losing control over the people:

- Official lies, deceit and rhetoric are no longer effective.
- No confidence in politics, which is all time low around the world and the general apathy citizens have towards political parties, as all main political parties are losing their members. It is clear that political establishment is not serving the needs of our society.
- There are signs that the world is moving away from US dominated world order as China signals a move towards a more multi polar world to balance America's status quo.
- No confidence in media, as media moguls are now no longer able to promote the lies. Therefore, the establishment media failed to sell the lies about the alleged Syria chemical attack, as it has lied so many times before, in Afghanistan and Iraq. The myth of war and imperial adventures have been exposed and war is becoming increasingly unpopular and people are becoming war weary. Social media is breaking open the agenda setting off self serving political and economic elite.
- Bankers are more and more rejected: Hungary recently became the first country to follow Iceland's lead by shedding international bankers and is considering pursuing prosecution of past prime ministers who enslaved the people with debt.
- Mutiny among soldiers: Finally. Soldiers, who are outlawed from making political statements, are steadily speaking out against US military adventurism. As Einstein famously said "The pioneers of a warless world are the young men (and women) who refuse military service."
- Militarised police state: One of the darkest signs that the elite are losing their grip on power is the construction of the militarised police state specifically trained to combat domestic civil unrest. Police worldwide criminalising dissent and are asserting new power in crack down on protests using excessive force.

People are waking up in droves, at least as fast as the elite can build their full-spectrum prison matrix. To quote Victor Hugo, "No army can stop an idea whose time has come."

Our Vision – A World Without War

Our vision is to achieve a peaceful, safer, violence free, ethical, compassionate, and non-killing world. As human beings, single or community or in a family, how can we live peacefully with each other? This can be realised by uprooting wars and inequality from our society through harnessing spiritual nonviolent soft power approach – dialogue, diplomacy, conflict resolution, education for culture of peace and a foreign policy which encourages peaceful negotiations for a better world.

To understand war is to understand that it is the projection of inner conflict in human beings which is projected outside. Individual violent behaviour is an extension of leading to tribal warfare. It is essential to see that along with political, economic, scientific and cultural reasons the inner conflict is also a root cause of war.

When we cannot establish inner peace, we cannot establish world peace. One reason there is no world peace is because many minds have opposite views of what reality should be, who should be in control, and what is right and wrong. The emotions that accompany these positions promote resistance, hate, a desire to dominate others, and a cultural willingness to kill. These attitudes block our capacity for creatively addressing the challenges of our times.

In fact it has been established in various studies that human beings are not inherently warlike creatures. Hunter-gatherer life led by the vast majority of our ancestors might have been entirely free from organised conflict, at least before the advent of agriculture and animal husbandry. So war is a recent phenomenon which may have started around 10,000 years ago when hunter-gatherer life changed to agricultural mode and animal husbandry.

Seville Statement on Violence

The belief that our ancestors have been violence free has been endorsed by scientists gathered at Seville in a conference sponsored by UNESCO. They produced a document which came to be known as Seville Statement on Violence. The statement proclaims:

It is scientifically incorrect to say:

1. That we have inherited a tendency to make war from our animal ancestors.
2. That war or any other violent behaviour is genetically programmed in our human nature.
3. That in the course of human evolution there has been a selection for aggressive behaviour more than for other kinds of behaviour.
4. That humans have a “violent brain.”
5. That war is caused by “instinct” or any other single motivation.

The statement concluded that biology does not condemn humanity to war, humanity can be freed from biological construct that violence is genetically built up in the framework of humans.

History can attest to the fact that most human conflicts have been as a result of a stubborn approach by our leaders who are forced by military and corporate to go war. Our history would turn out for the better if our leaders could just learn that most disputes can be resolved by showing a willingness to understand the issues of our opponents and by using diplomacy and compassion.

Pillars of Peace

The Pillars of Peace describe the attitudes, institutions and structures that are associated with peaceful societies. The research defines 8 key Pillars that underpin peace. These Pillars are: a well functioning government, a sound business environment, an equitable distribution of resources, an acceptance of the rights of others, good relations with neighbours, free flow of information, a high level of human capital, and low levels of corruption.

Alternatives to Military Spending

The alternatives are military reduction, cutback on global arms trade, reforms of the monetary system to a wisdom based, social caring economy and addressing root causes of violence, wars, terrorism and creating incentives for peace economy.

US and Western countries need urgently to restructure their economies away from its dependence on military sector. How can it be done?

Shift workers from war industry into 'green collar' jobs – renewable, waste management, pollution control, carbon capture.

Reform the arms, financial and drug industries, who work on giving bribes to win contracts, leading to economic instability. Close down corruption loopholes and fraud which has cost the UK economy \$73 billion in 2011 – most notably the \$43 billion BAE Al-Yamama arms deal to Saudi Arabia.

Reforming the Financial and Banking Sector

International Financial Community need to implement a swift reduction in corruption, illicit financial flows, money laundering, tax evasion and hidden ownership of assets.

We need to make progress in three areas:

- a) trade which serves the interest of developing countries by scaling down the common agricultural policy, subsidies to US cotton farmers, and to weapon manufacturers.
- b) greater corporate transparency
- c) action against tax havens.

Sustainable Peace for All

Sustainable peace is when people have justice, equality and freedom from want (hunger) and fear and have free access to food, shelter, education, healthcare and equal opportunities. We need to contain the endless expansion of production in pursuit of maximum private profit which is the basis of global capitalist economy. An obsession with growth has eclipsed our concern for sustainability, justice and human dignity. This system is environmentally unsustainable, and has also resulted in increasing inequality, enduring poverty, ruinous misallocation of resources and a series of devastating financial crisis. It is one of the main root causes of conflict/wars and underdevelopment.

Reform UN to play better leadership role in new global economy, international peace and security, protection of human rights and tackling climate change crisis. To take steps for a more democratic, accountable and transparent United Nations, with fair representation of members.

These are some of the ways we can change the system:

A New Campaign Idea for Peacekeeping – 4D for World Peace

To highlight, promote and adopt the soft power approach for the well being of humanity, we need to reinforce the fact that there should not be any place for violence and wars in our society. There are no military solutions –

dialogue and diplomacy are the key which can guarantee lasting peace. In 2012 I started a campaign, 4D for World Peace inspired by my book the Economics of Killing. It is a campaign for civil society groups to work not only to change government policies, but also economic incentives and cultural understandings.

The 4D's are DISARMAMENT, DEMILITARISATION, DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY

This campaign aims to create global frameworks for taking actions on interconnecting global issues of disarming and demilitarising the world and the savings thus accrued to be deployed for real development and genuine democracy. World Peace and building a compassionate society is not a utopian dream. It can be realised by overcoming forces of destruction, violence, & war mongering. A film Change the World and a booklet 4D for World Peace is taking the campaign to the next level.

The mission of the campaign is to take the Quantum Leap Faster, Higher, and Further to spread the message of 4D which is resolution of conflicts in a peaceful way. The campaign has many supporters the world over.

"I support this important campaign of 4D for World Peace necessary steps to peace."

- Mairhead Maguire, Noble Peace Laureate, Northern Ireland.

"I support Uniting for Peace for a safer world and endorse 4D for World Peace. 4D, Count me in...!" – Deepak Chopra, Best Selling Author

"Peace is not only the absence of war, it means calm and it means conditions where human beings can maintain their human integrity" – Dr. Shirin Ebadi Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Iran, says about 4D for World Peace campaign

How the World Benefits?

It will benefit by bringing fundamental shift in our ethics and values to eradicate wars, violence and establish peace to reduce debt and financial crisis in which US and most of European countries are engulfed. According to Global Peace Index 2011, if the countries cut back their violence at the rate of 25% for example, it could save global economy \$3 trillion. Eradicating violence altogether, can create a stimulus of \$9 trillion, enough to tackle financial, climate change crisis and wipe out hunger and extreme poverty including covering cost of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It could also provide education, stimulate culture and improve social justice. The total impact of violence in 2012 was \$185 billion to UK economy.

As I have said in my book, military spending is anti development. The developing world does not need hand-outs from industrialised nations. All it needs is a level playing field and leaders who place their country's interest over personal wealth. A Chinese proverb states "Give a man a fish and you feed him for one meal, teach him to fish and he is set for life." This philosophy should be applied to International Trade, i.e. to achieve China like levels of human development and economic prosperity.

Nonviolent Ways to End Wars and Conflicts

Nonviolent actions and civil resistance has been used for centuries to achieve peace and justice. There are examples of people and countries working in creative ways to end violence. In 1948, Costa Rica abolished its army and since has been able to invest resources in public interest – education, healthcare, development or quite simply it invested in its people. No one has attacked Costa Rica because they have no army.

Nonviolent peaceful means have achieved miracles. Some examples are Indian Independence Movement, the Civil Rights Movement in the US, Good Friday Agreement, Northern Ireland Peace Process, the recent Orange revolution in Ukraine, Velvet revolution in Czech Republic, Rose revolution in Georgia in Europe, and the

reunification of Germany are a few examples where non violent revolutions have taken place instead of bloodshed.

Europe, with all its problems, is an example of one of the most peaceful region in the world. Europe during the first half of the 20th Century, not once (WWI) but twice (WWII) wrecked itself. Now after the creation of European Union and enhancement of trade, war between UK and France or France and Germany is inconceivable.

Gandhi wrote in Hind Swaraj, 1909, "Hundreds of nations live in peace. History does not and cannot take a note of this fact." We do not hear about peaceful living because peace is normal condition of life. So history does not take a note of ordinary and normal.

Plans for Demilitarisation and Cutting Military Spending

Any demilitarisation plan should begin with US by slashing its cold war level of military spending being the biggest player in arms race. As a start, US could easily cut 15% from the defence budget, saving US\$1 trillion and terminating wasteful projects such as the F-35 fighter (\$1.51 trillion over its lifecycle \$680 million apiece) and the Virginia class submarine (\$2.4 billion per unit), and shrinking the bureaucracy at the Pentagon that consumes 40% of its budget. Withdrawing from Iraq and Afghanistan; the cost of which is already estimated at 4 to 6 trillion US dollars, and loss of hundreds of thousands of lives.

UK Military Spending – Is It Justified?

In the UK we can save huge amount of money by scaling down on Trident nuclear submarine replacement, which will cost UK economy over \$130 billion over its 30 year lifecycle whose maintenance per year is costing £3 billion per year.

British involvement in wars is staggering. Both under Conservative and Labour governments, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Sierra Leone, Bosnian war etc. It is time we stop beating the war drums and start working for peace

A new report by Scientist for Global Responsibility uncovers aggressive focus of UK military research and development. It is estimated that 76% of the UK government's military research and development (R&D) spending is heavily focused on offensive weapons systems, which do not tackle the main threats to our security.

Telling the Truth and Civil Society Actions

The young are taking to the streets and following practical steps for social change – things that we can all do to oppose violence, wars, militarisms and promote a more peaceful, ethical and compassionate world:

- Study the problem, write to your MP, key decision makers and government ministers, world leaders and the editors of newspapers. Challenge elected officials who make the decisions to fund wars. Build a relationship with your local and national elected officials by writing letters, making phone calls, and setting up lobby visits to the parliament.
- Educate the public, hold meetings and run workshops like the one today. Contact your local peace, development, human rights, environmental, interfaith group to discuss the issue and take action. Governments are afraid of informed public demanding changes.
- Be your own media – call a radio show or participate in a TV show or create a peace and nonviolent media centre. Join groups like Uniting for Peace, CND, CAAT, UNA and develop activism and actions for culture of peace
- Start 4D for World Peace Campaign, show the film, discuss the issues and take action for a more peaceful world. Research and take action on:
 - a) Military and social spending – imbalance of development and defence budgets

- b) Weapon and their impact on communities
- c) Resource conflicts, militarisation of aid, foreign military bases and human security.
- History shows that all reforms and changes in the world begins with one person. “Who should start” to bring to the world? The “individual person”... not religious leaders, not the United Nations, but each of us,” Dalai Lama said. “Then, from one person to 10 persons, 100 persons, 1,000 persons. So I think any sort of movement among humanity ... must start from the individual.”
- Speak truth to the power as there is nothing more dangerous living in a society whose citizens are afraid to speak the truth. We need more courageous people risking their life like Julian Assange, Bradley Manning, Edward Snowden who exposed the torture, illegal detentions and crimes perpetrated by US in Iraq, Afghanistan etc. The leaked information shows how corrupt is the military system which dominates economy and society. And how the secret state wages perpetual war behind our back.

Our hope for abolition of war and demilitarisation lies with us – Citizen Power. We can mobilise strong grassroots movements, to change public opinion with the help of internet and social media.

We need to begin education from the time children enter school about conflict resolution and the actions we all need to take to create a global culture of peace. Once David Frost challenged John Lennon in an interview, "When Hitler marched into Czechoslovakia, if people had said 'peace and love' to him, it wouldn't have done much good." Lennon said, "No, but what if they had been saying it to him from the moment he was born? That was wonderful." Gandhi also said that if we want peace in the world, we have to start with children.

Breaking the Patterns and the Mindset that gets us into War

UNESCO Declaration of Culture of Peace say, “Since wars began in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that defences of peace must be constructed.” So the bottom-line is, we have to change the mindset and attitudes of people with deliberate efforts for breaking the patterns and conditioning of the mind hardwired for war for thousands of years.

In the book *Evolving Self*, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi said:

“In order to gain control of consciousness, we must learn how to moderate the biases built into the machinery of the brain. We allow a whole series of illusions to stand between ourselves and reality.... These distortions are comforting, yet they need to be seen through for the self to be truly liberated... to come ever closer to getting a glimpse of the universal order, and of our part in it.”

J Khrisnamurti philosopher and spiritualist, has explained how we can change ourselves by not killing our own kind and said:

This can be done if we liberate our minds and shed all shackles that rationalise using culture, religion and societal norms to justify our lack of actions. Once we transcend conditioned consciousness then we will have the vitality, the energy, to transform ourselves as civilised human beings, not killing each other. Right now we can change both psychologically and outwardly. First the psychological revolution, not evolution, but revolution, change completely. That is the real action of humankind, not trying to fiddle around on the periphery for putting an end to wars.

For achieving a peaceful world, there is a desperate need to change global spending priorities and calculating the true costs of war and conflicts. The global community spends more than \$1.75 trillion per year on military and weapon programmes against \$129 billion (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2010 report) on global development, less than \$10 billion on UN Peacekeeping operations, and less than \$4 billion (African Development Report 2008/2009) on peace building and conflict resolution activities. This mismatch of

funding need to be challenged and changed for building sustainable peaceful societies with money being spent on health, education and decent living for all.

“Remember, peace is our birth right, a Human Right and we should claim it”

Grassroots activists and change-makers, let me share a pragmatic vision with you. Let us create a public outcry and demand for abolition of war and military spending for eradicating violence and building a peaceful world. Let us campaign towards replacing 25 million soldiers worldwide with 25 million peace-workers, the world will be a different place.

Conclusion

We are in the beginning of the 21st Century. People are throwing off their mental shackles and realising their potential. A new age of enlightenment has begun in which we have already seen worldwide rise of nonviolent activities and achievements for seeking alternatives to war and violence. There has been key moments in history where ordinary people have risen up and struggled against governments, corporations and even empires. Let me conclude by saying that slavery, colonialism, apartheid and gender discrimination in voting, all been abolished. Let's work for the day when people seeking peace, like wonderful people in this room, will be in majority, barriers to peace will be lowered and future will be safe, secure and war will be abolished. It is already happening as more and more people refuse to be frightened, faint hearted and passive spectators who refuse to accept the present system based on greed, speculation and imposition. I believe all global citizens have the passion, talent, determination and power to be agents of change. After Arab Spring, Europe's Indignados, Occupy movement and now the Turkish and Brazilian Spring where millions of people are demanding a better future, the youth and citizens of today have what it takes to change the world as world is ready to be moved. Now is **your** time and **your** moment. Let's live our pragmatic vision and change the world together.

Let me end this talk by a poignant quote from a Hiroshima Survivor, Hisako Kimura who was only aged 8 in 1945 when the bombing of Hiroshima took place in which 140,000 lives were lost.

“I must convey to the youth the sanctity of peace, the terror of war, the tremendous power of the atomic bombing. As long as I have breath and strength, I must tell the terrible story to help bring about the abolition of nuclear weapons.”

– Thanks for listening

The materials and excerpts have been taken from the book *The Economics of Killing*. This speech can be downloaded from www.unitingforpeace.com

Please watch 4D for World Peace film:

“Change the World” – <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V9GEK4FFrXk>

Bio – **Vijay Mehta** is a renowned author, international speaker and global activist for peace, development and human rights. He is the chair of Uniting for Peace (www.unitingforpeace.org) and Founding Trustee of Fortune Forum Charity (www.fortuneforum.org).

Working since 1979, Uniting for Peace is a non-profit organisation devoted to creating and promoting a global culture of peace, nonviolence and poverty reduction. The flagship campaign of Uniting for Peace is called 4D for World Peace. It is a campaign to create global frameworks for taking actions on interconnecting global issues of disarming and demilitarising the world and the savings thus achieved to be deployed for development and democracy.

The charity Fortune Forum whose founder is Renu Mehta, daughter of Vijay Mehta, held summits (2005 and 2006) where Former US President Clinton, Former US Vice President Al Gore and Actor Michael Douglas were keynote speakers. The summits raised over a million pounds for charity and attracted a worldwide audience of 1.3 billion people (one fifth of humanity) including print and media coverage.

Vijay Mehta’s books include *The Economics of Killing* (2012), *The Fortune Forum Code: For a Sustainable Future* (2006), *Arms No More* (2005) and *The United Nations and its Future in the 21st Century* (2005).

He has appeared in various TV programmes including BBC World, Press TV, Aitak-24 hour Indian news channel, and Think Peace documentary, Canada, among others. The Sunday Times, Independent, Observer and Guardian newspapers, among other journals have written about him. His life is devoted to the service of peace, humanity and our planet.

Vijay Mehta is the recipient of the Global Indian Karmaveer (Action hero) Puraskaar (Award) by iCONGO (International Confederation of NGO’s). He is now a noble-laureate 2012 – 2013 of the iCONGO team of advisors and mentors (www.icongo.in). It is an award for outstanding luminaries working for peace and social justice.

He has been appointed a fellow of the New Westminster College, Province of British Columbia, Canada in 2013.

Vijay Mehta’s new book **“The Economics of Killing: How the West Fuels Wars and Poverty in the Developing World”** is published by Pluto Press (UK) / Palgrave Macmillan (USA) / Amazon (Worldwide). For reviews and endorsements of the book, please visit: www.theeconomicsofkilling.org

“Vijay....a long standing activist for peace, development, human rights and environment”
The Sunday Times Magazine, London 1st February, 2009

“Vijay Mehta lends intellectual credibility to the project and wrote ‘The Fortune Forum Code for a Sustainable Future’, a sort of manifesto that will underpin the group’s future activities.”
The Independent, London 26 September 2006