

be spent in a more benign way.⁹ Decisions on how much to spend on military activities and how much for environmental improvements are already under review in many countries, and will become increasingly scrutinized as environmental considerations become more closely associated with mainstream thinking on what makes up national security. Too much expenditure on the military could lead to environmental vulnerability; on the other hand, too much emphasis on the environment could lead to a lack of military preparedness and military vulnerability. In this respect, in both cases, objective threat assessments are essential. An effective mechanism of translating the two very different threat assessments into a common denominator is also needed.¹⁰

Secondly, the preparation for war contributes to pollution and environmental damage. The most notable example is the development and testing of nuclear weapons, particularly the above-ground open air testing of such of devices.¹¹ Even when not tested in the atmosphere, the production of nuclear arms has produced significant quantities of radioactive waste. Improper storage of fuels and the disposal of wastes are also problems. For example, the Latvian Environment Minister has estimated that it will cost billions of dollars to clean areas occupied by former Soviet troops.¹²

Thirdly, war is directly responsible for environmental destruction, although the degree of destruction varies tremendously with the type of warfare. Both conventional and nuclear wars contribute to environmental degradation, but nuclear

⁹Contrary to the popular view that all developing countries spend a disproportionately large share of their GDP on the military, there is a large degree of variance. According to UNDP, such countries as Ethiopia, Mozambique and Yemen spent over 10 percent of GDP on military expenditures, while others, such as Gambia, Malawi and Zaire spent less than 2 percent. Military expenditure as a percent of GDP 1990-91: United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Report 1994, Table 21, pp. 170-1.

¹⁰The establishment of such a mechanism is not an easy task. While the environmental and military threats are two aspects of the "human security" concept, to address "human security" fully some measure of the various costs and benefits of each of the component parts would be required. This would be complicated by the subjective nature of measuring the threats to the component parts.

¹¹A number of international agreements place constraints on nuclear weapons or the testing of weapons, such as the Nonproliferation Treaty and The Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests into the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water.

¹²World Environment Report, "Baltics Optimistic Soviet Damage To Environment Can Be Reversed", Vol.20, No.26, p. 224.