

Sustainable Security

A statement of concern

October 2010

We are in this world together but the way we are living is unsustainable; this makes the world less secure. Our consumption of consumer goods and our dependence on fossil fuels - using finite natural resources and producing ever-more waste - continue to grow. This in turn contributes to hugely destabilising climate change and to unbalanced and unfair economic relationships: where inequalities exist, conflict is inevitable. The interests of those whose power comes from the control of diminishing resources are protected by ever-more costly military and other technology as a mistaken means to building security.

Sustainable security means ensuring a secure future for all based on tackling the causes of conflict and insecurity: understanding the real threats and how they can be dealt with so there is peace and justice for everyone throughout the earth for the long term and striving for a balance with nature.

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As Quakers, we have a respect for all of humanity and for other living things. The Quaker peace testimony has always been about seeking to address the causes of war as well as about how we respond to conflict without resorting to violence. Our testimonies to equality and simplicity are similarly about ensuring that all people be enabled to flourish and live.

We know that some conflict is inevitable. We know too that we can choose to develop understanding as to how we contribute to causes of conflict, and in how we respond to and deal with this. Do we accept the short-termist, market-driven approaches that drive resource misuse, inequality, instability and conflict?

It can be easy to feel despondent and fearful. But we can use these emotions in a positive way, to help motivate us in working together to develop a vision of alternative ways of being together on this planet. We depend on all life. It is vital that we recognise that all have the same rights to security and well-being, and that we change from a society driven by perceived wants and fears to one that addresses the real long-term needs of all. Our unsustainable way of living on this planet grows from a mindset; a change is needed to this mindset to underpin the many encouraging practical steps that people are already taking towards more sustainable and equitable ways of living.

We are called to ask questions to promote dialogue and action. We ask that politicians and others in positions of influence and power - including businesses and media organisations - recognise this moral imperative and work together, responding in words and in action to create sustainable security for all.

Some Questions for reflection, discussion and action

- What makes us secure in this world?
- How can we move from a world driven by the struggle for power and control over the lives and resources of others to a world based on equality and respect for all life?
- How can we support one another in building that alternative?
- What resources can we draw on to help ourselves and others deal with pressures of change in ways that are peaceful and build sustainable security?
- What are the political and practical consequences of this?
- What opportunities can you take to raise these concerns with others and to take positive action for change?

Further information...

We have compiled a page of links to related organisations sources of information relevant to the issues covered in our statement of concern. You can find this at:

<http://nfpb.org.uk>



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Charity: SC 024632 Peace work for and by Quakers in Northern Britain