Compiled by BICC, the Global Militarization Index (GMI) presents the relative weight and importance of a country’s military apparatus in relation to its society as a whole. This year’s GMI compares the level of militarization with the Global Hunger Index 2016 published by Welthungerhilfe.

The Global Hunger Index 2016 explains hunger not only in economic or climate change terms but also with regard to instability or violent conflict. The fact that most states in which the levels of hunger are serious also have comparatively low levels militarization shows that a low level of militarization often does not point to a peaceful society but rather to a weak security sector and the absence of a safe environment. "Examples for this are in particular former civil war countries, such as Sierra Leone (position 146) and Liberia (position 149) that belong to those countries that suffer from 'serious' or even 'very serious' hunger", stresses Professor Dr Conrad Schetter, Director for Research at BICC and member of the Supervisory Board of the Deutsche Welthungerhilfe.

Yet again, within the 20 states that suffer the most from hunger, there are also countries with a relatively high level of militarization. These are Chad (position 68), Namibia (46), Pakistan (52) or Angola (37), the most militarized country in Sub-Saharan Africa. "There, high investment might be tied up in military resources that would otherwise be available to fight hunger or to invest in the health system", Conrad Schetter concludes.

The GMI
The Global Militarization Index presents on an annual basis the relative weight and importance of a country’s military apparatus in relation to its society as a whole. It compares, for example, military expenditures with a country’s gross domestic product (GDP) and its health expenditure (as share of its GDP). The GMI 2016 covers 152 states and is based on the latest available figures (in most cases data for 2015). The index project is financially supported by Germany’s Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).