

# REBALANCING THE US NATIONAL SECURITY BUDGET

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In response to the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Congress increased the US military budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 by \$49.6 billion, which exceeded the total military budget of every other nation on earth. As the budget deficit tops \$500 billion, the administration's 2005 budget projects military spending of \$2.2 trillion over the next five years. The question is whether all this money is being spent wisely on priorities that will do the most to increase our security. A recent task force report, A Unified Security Budget for the United States, argues that it is not.

Why? Three reasons. First, the money has been spent on a force structure that does not match today's security threats. Second, a major portion of the force has been committed to the wrong mission. And third, these increases have come at the expense of spending on other tools, in addition to military forces, that we need to make us secure.

## Rebalancing the Security Budget

The Bush administration proposes to spend seven times as much in 2005 for the military portion of the national security budget as for the nonmilitary portion. Its FY 2005 budget requests \$430 billion (not including the costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan) for military tools, but only \$62 billion for nonmilitary tools, including international security programs and homeland security. When expected costs of Iraq and Afghanistan are added in, the administration allocates twenty times as much for military forces as for international programs (\$23 billion) and more than ten times as much for military forces as for homeland security programs (\$39 billion).

The Unified Security Budget report outlines a security budget that corrects these imbalances. It rebalances our military forces to make them more useful for addressing today's threats. It also increases funding for the neglected security tools that will help us to address problems before they become armed conflicts, and to use multilateral approaches to resolve conflicts when they do occur.

It takes the path of fiscal responsibility by not adding to (or subtracting from) the broad national security budget, but instead rebalances spending within it. The proposal cuts military spending where it can be cut. It refocuses military forces to be more effective. And it increases funding for the security tools outside the Defense Department that have, in recent years, been pared back too far. The result is a budget that will do more than simply "plussing up" the Pentagon's accounts will do to make us, and the rest of the world, more secure. It accomplishes this by focusing more resources on preventing future wars, and their human and financial costs, rather than on simply funding the wars as they come along.

The proposal shows how funding can be shifted within and out of military accounts for an overall saving of \$51 billion. And it outlines \$52 billion in new spending on non-military measures. This shift would change the current 7 to 1 ratio of military to non-military security tools to 3 to 1 - a better balance for the United States' long-term security needs.

The Task Force that developed the proposal intended the specific budget recommendations not as definitive proposals individually endorsed by each member, but as a broad outline showing the major elements of a unified security budget that incorporates nonmilitary tools into our security strategy and rebalances military forces for today's security challenges.

## Realigning the US Military

The wars in Afghanistan and especially Iraq have reaffirmed that the US military is unmatched in conventional combat. The Iraq invasion, however - or rather the political and military mess left in its wake - has also shown how ill-prepared the military is for missions such as occupation, security and peacekeeping, and how adversaries will learn to avoid our overwhelming strength and attack where we are not so strong. The priority for our military should not be another generation of expensive aircraft, ships, and missiles designed to combat a superpower, but rather the basic equipment and skills needed to counter adversaries who have less technologically-advanced equipment, but intense commitment to their struggle.

The forthcoming generation of weapon “platforms” is both marginally relevant to today's complex political conflicts and exceedingly costly. Reducing, and in some cases canceling, these programs while preserving basic military research and development (R&D) can free tens of billions of dollars annually that can then be applied to military and nonmilitary programs that will do more to make the nation secure. The imperative to do this - and the political feasibility of doing it - was illustrated by the Army’s abrupt decision to cancel its long-running Comanche attack helicopter program in February 2004, as called for by this Unified Security Budget report.

Proposed Military Program Changes	Annual change in funding, billions of dollars
Prepare for new missions - Improve capabilities for peacekeeping, stability, and counterterrorist missions	+5.0
F/A-22 Raptor fighter - Cancel and buy existing upgraded aircraft	-4.0
Virginia-class submarine - Reduce purchases and stop retiring existing submarines early	-2.1
Comanche helicopter - Cancel and focus on UAVs [The program has now been cancelled.]	-1.4
DDX destroyer - Replace with smaller ships	-2.0
Future Combat System - Slow the unrealistic program schedule	-0.7
Nuclear warhead maintenance - Reduce rebuilding of nuclear warheads	-1.5
Missile defense - Focus on short-range defense and limited national missile defense R&D	-8.0
Army Guard divisions - Reduce the Guard reserve force	-4.0
R&D - Restore a justifiable funding level	-22.0
NATO force - Make fuller use of NATO military capabilities	-7
TOTAL	-51

## Addressing Security Deficits

Funding for the diplomatic, economic, and informational tools of national security, and for mobilizing and strengthening international action to increase global security, is being squeezed by sharply increased military spending. Re-allocating funding to International Affairs and Homeland Security programs can help restore the balance.

The US international affairs budget needs to be viewed as part of the overall national security budget, since building solid international networkships to address the causes of conflict is cost effective “preventive medicine”

that reduces the need for expensive military responses later. The percentage of the US budget devoted to international affairs has been declining for four decades. Despite last year's increase for HIV AIDS through the Millennium Challenge Account, international affairs spending accounts for only slightly more than 1% of the US discretionary budget. Unacceptable tradeoffs are the result: forced choices between secure embassies and modern communications systems for diplomats or adequate funding for peacekeeping, and between adequate funding for the Middle East peace process or safeguarding nuclear weapons and materials in Russia.

Increases need to be made to both parts of the international affairs budget: to the State Department budget, which includes the cost of US diplomacy and US assessed contributions to international organizations and peacekeeping, and to the foreign operations budget, which includes bilateral development and humanitarian aid. The United States is the least generous among all major donor countries in development assistance as a portion of Gross Domestic Product. The aid budget, in addition to being increased, needs to be redirected to focus most of its resources on countries most in need.

Although President Bush's FY 2005 budget increases homeland security funding in certain areas, other key priorities are neglected. Department of Homeland Security funding for emergency responders in small- and medium-sized cities, for example, is cut by 46%. Overall federal homeland security-related funding for police drops from \$4.9 billion to \$3.3 billion. Despite the establishment of a new cabinet department, the United States remains woefully vulnerable to terrorist attacks. According to a Brookings Institution study in 2003, many steps taken already "reflect a response to past tactics of al Qaeda, not an anticipation of possible future innovations in how that organization or other terrorist groups might try to harm Americans." The report called for urgently "filling the gaps that remain in the current homeland security effort. These range from creation of a new networked intelligence capability that tries to anticipate and prevent future terrorist actions, to greater protections for private infrastructure like chemical plants and skyscrapers, to a much stronger Coast Guard and Customs service (within DHS)."

A 2003 Council on Foreign Relations Task Force, chaired by former Senator Warren Rudman, focused specifically on emergency response to a catastrophic attack and found that "[i]f the nation does not take immediate steps to better identify and address the urgent needs of emergency responders, the next terrorist incident could have an even more devastating impact than the Sept. 11 attacks." The Task Force called for increasing spending on police, fire, medical, and other first responders approximately \$100 billion over five years, which would also have substantial immediate benefits for day-to-day emergency response unrelated to terrorist attacks.

In addition, increasing funding for other homeland security programs can help prevent successful attacks in the first place, such as doubling Coast Guard and Border Patrol programs, and increasing port container inspections tenfold.

The changes suggested for International Affairs and Homeland Security were based on the reports of various experts and commissions, where available, such as the Task Force on DOE Nonproliferation Programs with Russia; the joint recommendations in one area of Frank Carlucci, Richard Allen, Samuel Berger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, William Clark, Henry Kissinger, Anthony Lake, Brent Scowcroft; the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World; the Brookings Institution task force on Protecting the American Homeland: One Year On; and the Council on Foreign Relations Independent Task Force on Emergency Responders.

Proposed Nonmilitary Program Changes  
International Affairs Programs

increased annual funding, billions of dollars

Nonproliferation programs	1.5
Diplomatic Operations	2
Economic development aid	10
US international communication	1.2
US contributions to UN/regional peace operations	0.5
UN civilian police force	0.2
International organizations	0.1
Homeland Security Programs	
Increase emergency responder preparation	20
Double Coast Guard and Border Patrol programs	11
Increase port container inspection, tenfold	5
TOTAL	52.0

The full report, A Unified Security Budget for the United States, is available online at [www.cdi.org/news/mrp/Unified-Budget.pdf](http://www.cdi.org/news/mrp/Unified-Budget.pdf) or [www.fpiif.org/pdf/defensereport/fulltext.pdf](http://www.fpiif.org/pdf/defensereport/fulltext.pdf).

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