



Toward a Nuclear Free Future: making sense of nuclear weapons in 2010

“President Obama’s fiscal 2011 budget blueprint calls for an increase in funding of more than 13 percent for the agency that oversees the U.S. nuclear weapons complex, a greater percentage increase than for any other government agency.”

Walter Pincus, *The Washington Post* (2.3.10)

In Prague last April, President Obama raised the world’s hopes with his speech calling for a “nuclear free future.” Since then, his Administration has made non-proliferation – preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to other nations, *not nuclear weapons abolition* – its top national security priority.

As part of this effort, U.S. officials negotiated important, but modest, reductions in the number of U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons. Yet, even as we monitor arms control gains, we must also be aware that President Obama’s FY2011 budget proposed increases in nuclear weapons spending to levels not seen since the Reagan Administration. Indeed, General Chilton, head of the U.S. Strategic Command insists that the United States must prepare for nuclear war for the next 40 years. The stakes are high. 2010 is a critically important year.

Opportunities Ahead

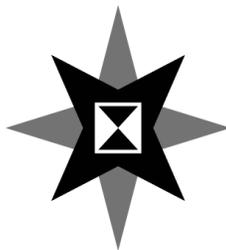
During this May’s Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference at the United Nations, the vast majority of the world’s nations will call for the U.S. and other nuclear powers to fulfill their Article VI Treaty obligation and begin negotiations for the elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

The U.S.-Russian Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) 1 Follow On Treaty was signed this April in Prague and will be brought to the U.S. Senate for ratification later this year. The first START, signed in 1991, expiring last December, placed limits on U.S. and Soviet nuclear arsenals. The Follow On Treaty is expected to reduce each side’s deployed nuclear arsenal to 1550 strategic warheads, reductions of just over 600 on each side. Ratification of the Treaty without debilitating amendments will open the way for further negotiations to reduce stockpiled and deployed nuclear weapons and will help to stem nuclear weapons proliferation.

The Obama Administration also hopes to bring the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to the Senate for ratification. Nuclear weapons cannot be fully developed or deployed without the explosive nuclear tests that will be banned if this treaty goes into effect. The Treaty’s ratification and subsequent enforcement are essential to both non-proliferation efforts and to moving the nuclear powers toward fulfillment of their Article VI NPT obligations – both declared goals of the Obama Administration. (Note: While the U.S. has conducted 1,054 nuclear weapons tests and since 1992, it has honored an international moratorium and refrained from conducting any additional explosive radioactive tests.)

The **American Friends Service Committee’s** Peace and Economic Security Program provides educational resources and works to empower popular opinion and movements to achieve common security within the United States and internationally.

The program focuses on a range of issues including economic justice, preventing nuclear war and eliminating nuclear weapons, ending U.S. wars and occupations in the Middle East and Central Asia, demilitarization of U.S. Asia-Pacific policies, and the withdrawal of foreign military bases. For more information see www.afsc.org/pes or write: PES@afsc.org.



Did you know?

At \$5.6 billion, the Energy Department’s requested cleanup budget for FY 2011 is \$54 million below current levels (a roughly one percent decrease), and is projected to decline gradually over the next five years.

Budgets Matter

Today the U.S. has an estimated 9,400 nuclear weapons. Roughly 2,300 are operationally deployed. The stockpile of more than 7,000 nuclear warheads needs to be eliminated. Doing so would provide a powerful incentive for Russia to respond in kind, would encourage disarmament measures by other nations, and would mean a savings of billions of taxpayer dollars.

The Obama Administration's FY2011 budget proposes to increase total nuclear weapons-related spending by six percent. Meanwhile, although the \$3.2 billion Fiscal Year 2011 funding request for the Defense Department's and the Department of Energy's nonproliferation programs is an all-time high and \$1.3 billion more than FY 2008, funding for these programs is slated to level off after next year.

Freezing the nuclear weapons budget would save U.S. taxpayers \$4.3 billion over the next five years. Yet, even as the Obama Administration states it hopes to reduce the size of the stockpile, it is also seeking to "modernize" it as indicated by a 2011 budget request of \$2 billion for "Stockpile Support." – a 25 percent increase over current levels.

The \$2 billion request of "Stockpile Support" includes funding for production of the upgraded W-76 Trident missile, the refurbished B-61 bomb, and exploring options for maintaining W-78 Minuteman warheads for future use. This same \$2 billion could generate over 58,000 education-related jobs.

And, even as the Pentagon prepares to retire its nuclear version of the Navy's Tomahawk cruise missiles, President Obama's budget calls for spending \$800 million for the development of a new nuclear-capable cruise missile.

Leading figures in the Obama Administration, Henry Kissinger and others, are pressing for these increased investments to ensure the "reliability" of the U.S. nuclear stockpile. However, scientific reports prepared for the Pentagon have found "no evidence" that stockpiled U.S. nuclear weapons have deteriorated. They are "good to go" for decades to come. (Source: Federation of American Scientists: <http://www.fas.org/blog/ssp/2009/11/jason.php>)

Nuclear Weapons		
Cost	&	Opportunity
Freezing the DoE weapons budget at current levels – \$4.3 bn over five years	→	Increase current DoE cleanup budget by 15 percent annually for five years
Freezing the DoE weapons budget at current levels – \$4.3 bn over five years	→	Provide 312,000 households with renewable energy for 20 years
Projected 25 percent increase for Stockpile Support in FY 2011 – \$405 million	→	Provide four-year scholarships for 10,432 university students
\$800 million to develop new nuclear-capable cruise missile	→	Provide one year of "Head Start" for over 95,000 children
Reduce the Navy's Trident submarine fleet from 14 to 10 vessels – \$1.3 bn over 10 yrs	→	Build more than 4,500 affordable housing units
DoE's FY 2011 budget request for "Stockpile Support" – \$2 billion	→	Create more than 58,000 education-related jobs