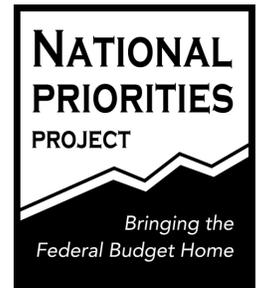


# Debts, Deficits, and Defense: A Way Forward

## Report of the Sustainable Defense Task Force



In January 2010, President Barack Obama formed the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform to advise the administration on options for addressing the U.S. national debt.

The Sustainable Defense Task Force was formed in response to a request from Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA), working in cooperation with Rep. Walter B. Jones (R-NC), Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX), and Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), to explore possible defense budget contributions to the Commission’s deficit reduction efforts that would not compromise the essential security of the United States. The Task Force released its report, “Debt, Deficits and Defense: A Way Forward,” in June, 2010.

The Task Force report does not include any recommendations related to the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It looks only at the Pentagon’s annual “base” budget. The report’s combined recommendations would cut \$960 billion over ten years, an average annual reduction of roughly 16 percent below current spending levels.

The report’s options are drawn from numerous sources, with particular care paid to making accurate savings estimates. The report relies heavily on government sources, including military service documents, federal budget materials, and reports by the Government Accountability Office, Congressional Budget Office and the Congressional Research Service.

The Task Force used a specific set of criteria to identify savings that could be achieved without compromising U.S. national security. The report focuses on:

- “Department of Defense programs that are based on unreliable or unproven technologies,
- Missions that exhibit a poor cost-benefit payoff and capabilities that fail the test of cost-effectiveness or that possess a very limited utility,
- Assets and capabilities that mismatch or substantially over-match current and emerging military challenges, and
- Opportunities for providing needed capabilities and assets at lower cost via management reforms.”

The Task Force’s recommendations look at six areas: **Strategic Forces** (nuclear weapons, Department of Energy infrastructure and programs, and missile defense and space programs); **Conventional Forces** (the size of the active duty Army and Marine Corps, number of Navy vessels, and aircraft carriers and air wings); **Procurement and Research & Development** (cancellation of specific weapons and reduced R&D funding); **Personnel Costs** (military compensation and DoD’s health care system, and recruiting expenses); **Maintenance & Supply Systems** (military depots, commissaries and exchanges); and **Command, Support and Infrastructure** (eliminating waste and overhead costs).

### Rethink, Reset, Reform

The Task Force acknowledges that while meaningful, these changes are not part of a comprehensive strategy. For the longer term, putting America’s defense establishment on a more sustainable path depends on the nation’s willingness to:

- “**Rethink** our national security commitments and goals to ensure that they focus clearly on what concerns us the most and what we most need in the realm of security;

### Estimated Annualized Savings From Task Force Recommendations

(“National Defense” Function 050 in Billions of 2010 Dollars)

Fiscal Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2011-2020
Savings	21	53	70	84	105	114	123	134	129	127	960

- **Reset** our national security strategy so that it reflects a cost-effective balance among the security instruments at our disposal and also uses those instruments in cost-effective ways;
- **Reform** our system of producing defense assets so that it is more likely to provide what we truly need at an affordable cost.”

## Options for Savings in Defense

### Strategic Capabilities

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1. Adopt dyad; cancel Trident II; reduce the US nuclear arsenal to:   | \$113.5 b. |
| • 1000 deployed warhead   |            |
| • 7 Ohio-class SSBNs  |            |
| • 160 Minuteman missiles  |            |
| 2. Limit modernization of nuclear weapons infrastructure and research | \$26 b.    |
| 3. Selectively curtail missile defense & space spending               | \$55 b.    |

### Conventional Forces

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|---|------------|
| 4. Reduce troops in Europe and Asia, cut end strength by 50,000     | \$80 b.    |
| 5. Roll back Army & USMC growth as wars in Iraq and Afghanistan end | \$147 b.   |
| 6. Reduce US Navy fleet to 230 ships                                | \$126.6 b. |
| 7. Retire two Navy aircraft carriers and naval air wings            | \$50 b.    |
| 8. Retire two Air Force fighter wings, reduce F-35 fighter buy      | \$40.3 b.  |

### Procurement and R&D

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|---|-------------------|
| 9. Cancel USAF F-35 fighter, buy replacement                    | \$47.9 b.         |
| 10. Cancel USN & USMC F-35 fighter, buy replacement             | \$9.85 b.         |
| 11. Cancel MV-22 Osprey, field alternatives                     | \$10 b. – \$12 b. |
| 12. Delay KC-X Airborne Tanker, interim upgrade of some KC-135s | \$9.9 b.          |
| 13. Cancel Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle, field alternatives   | \$8 b. – \$9 b.   |
| 14. Reduce spending on research & development                   | \$50 b.           |

### Personnel Costs

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|--|---------|
| 15. Reform military compensation                           | \$55 b. |
| 16. Reform DoD’s health care system                        | \$60 b. |
| 17. Reduce military recruiting expenditures as wars recede | \$5 b.  |

### Maintenance and Supply Systems

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|--|---------|
| 18. Improve the efficiency of military depots, commissaries, and exchanges | \$13 b. |
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### Command, Support, and Infrastructure

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|--|----------|
| 19. Require commensurate savings in command, support, and infrastructure | \$100 b. |
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### Resources

“Debt, Deficits, & Defense: A Way Forward,” Full Report: <http://www.comw.org/pda/fulltext/1006SDTFreport.pdf> ; Executive Summary only: <http://www.comw.org/pda/fulltext/SDTFreportexsum.pdf>  
 C-Span Coverage of Rep. Barney Frank and Task Force June 11, 2010 Briefing  
<http://www.c-spanarchives.org/program/294024-1&showFullAbstract=1>

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