



A NUCLEAR SPENDING BINGE

SECURITY AND ECONOMIC DOWNFALLS OF THE PROPOSED
BUILDUP OF THE U.S. NUCLEAR ARSENAL

BACKGROUND

- In 1970, the United States joined the **Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty**, which aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons with the eventual goal of achieving global disarmament. 191 countries have joined the Treaty, which was renewed indefinitely in 1995.
- Despite numerical reductions in the nuclear stockpile, the U.S. plans to develop the capability of its nuclear arsenal by **investing in qualitative improvements in existing weaponry**.
 - The U.S. and Russia signed the New START Treaty in 2010, which outlined agreements for bilateral reductions in the total number of weapons and bolster confidence of both countries to bolster confidence on both sides.
 - However, New START does not constrain technological developments in the existing arsenal. **Thus, while complying with numerical reductions under New START, the U.S. has significantly enhanced its nuclear weapons systems.** These qualitative improvements include technological developments that augment the capability of existing weapons and replacements of current systems with newer versions.

A 21ST CENTURY NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

- Upgrading the U.S. nuclear arsenal signals to other countries that the U.S. is not honoring its disarmament obligations. Rather, the spending proposal shows that the U.S. is committed to maintaining its nuclear arsenal indefinitely.
- The U.S. spending binge encourages other countries to invest in developing their nuclear weapons programs. **All other countries with nuclear weapons are working to expand the capability of their arsenals.**

WHERE WILL THE MONEY GO?

- Proposed spending will upgrade existing weapons and delivery systems, as well as completely replace some systems with new ones. The effort would include spending on:
 - A new fleet of 12 ballistic missile submarines to replace retiring submarines, each holding 20 missiles and up to 8 warheads per missile.
 - Replacing Minuteman III land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles with new missiles and supporting infrastructure.

- A new strategic bomber fleet and continuing modification of current bombers, including the purchase of 80-100 new bombers to replace older models.
- Developing a new fleet of 1,000 long range standoff missiles (LRSOs) to replace air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs).
- These programs would **extend the U.S. nuclear weapons program into the 2080s.**

THE COST

- The U.S. government has channeled substantial investments into developing the nuclear arsenal. The Department of Defense and Department of Energy requested a combined \$23 billion for nuclear weapons spending in 2016.
- Overall, the projected spending on nuclear weapons development over the next ten years comes to \$400 billion. **Over the next 30 years, investments to upgrade the U.S. nuclear weapons program are estimated to cost more than \$1.2 trillion.**
- There has been significant concern over the funding sources to upgrade the nuclear arsenal, and budget experts have predicted that these plans would siphon funds from the conventional military budget.

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GROWING NUCLEAR DANGERS

Former U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry:

"Today, the danger of some sort of nuclear catastrophe is greater than it was during the Cold War."

Martin Fleck, PSR Security Program Director:

"Our current program obstructs progress toward true disarmament. The U.S. should support global efforts to prohibit nuclear weapons, for the same reasons chemical and biological weapons have already been prohibited."

John Mecklin, Editor of *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*:

"These transformations and upgrades, designed to make weapons harder to shoot down and more precise and reliable, ensure that the world will be no less dangerous—and perhaps even more perilous—than it is now."