
Advancing Our Interests Through Engagement and Enlargement

A Policy Statement Issued By

The White House

[The following is an extract of pages 7-10 of Section II of a White House publication entitled, *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, released in February 1995. This document provides a formal expression of the Clinton Administration's strategy for maintaining the national security of the United States.]

The dawn of the post-Cold War era presents the United States with many distinct dangers, but also with a generally improved security environment and a range of opportunities to improve it further. The unitary threat that dominated our engagement during the Cold War has been replaced by a complex set of challenges. Our nation's strategy for defining and addressing those challenges has several core principles which guide our policy. First and foremost, we must exercise global leadership. We are not the world's policemen, but as the world's premier economic and military power, and with the strength of our democratic values, the U.S. is indispensable to the forging of stable political relations and open trade.

Our leadership must stress preventive diplomacy—through such means as support for democracy, economic assistance, overseas military presence, military-to-military contacts and involvement in multilateral negotiations in the Middle East and elsewhere—in order to help resolve problems, reduce tensions and defuse conflicts before they become crises. These measures are a wise investment in our national security because they offer the prospect of resolving problems with the least human and material cost.

Our engagement must be selective, focusing on the challenges that are most relevant to our own interests and focusing our resources where we can make the most difference. We must also use the right tools—being willing to act unilaterally when our direct national interests are most at stake; in alliance and partnership when our interests are shared by others; and multilaterally when our interests are more general and the problems are best addressed by the international community. In all cases, the nature of our response must depend on what best serves our own long-term national interest. Those interests are ultimately defined by our security requirements. Such requirements start with our physical defense and economic well-being. They also include environmental security as well as the security of values achieved through expansion of the community of democratic nations.

Our national security strategy draws upon a range of political, military, and economic instruments, and focuses on the primary objectives that President Clinton has stressed throughout his administration:

- **Enhancing Our Security.** Taking account of the reality of the post-Cold War era and the new threats, a military capability appropriately sized and postured to meet the diverse needs of our strategy, including the ability, in concert with regional allies to win two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts. We will continue to pursue arms control agreements to reduce the danger of nuclear, chemical, biological, and conventional conflict and to promote stability.

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- **Promoting Prosperity at Home.** A vigorous and integrated economic policy designed to stimulate global environmentally sound economic growth and free trade to press for open and equal U.S. access to foreign markets.
 - **Promoting Democracy.** A framework of democratic enlargement that increases our security by protecting, consolidating and enlarging the community of free market democracies. Our efforts focus on strengthening democratic processes in key emerging democratic states including Russia, Ukraine, and other new states of the former Soviet Union.

These basic objectives of our national security strategy will guide the allocation of our scarce national security resources. Because deficit reduction is also central to the long-term health and competitiveness of the American economy, we have made it, along with efficient and environmentally sound use of our resources, a major priority. Under the Clinton economic plan, the deficit will be reduced over 700 billion dollars by Fiscal Year 1998. President Clinton has also lowered the deficit as a percentage of the Gross Domestic Product from 4.9 percent in Fiscal Year 1992 to 2.4 percent in Fiscal Year 1995—the lowest since 1979.

Enhancing our Security

The U.S. government is responsible for protecting the lives and personal safety of Americans, maintaining our political freedom and independence as a nation, and promoting the well-being and prosperity of our nation. No matter how powerful we are as a nation, we cannot secure these basic goals unilaterally. Whether the problem is nuclear proliferation, regional instability, the reversal of reform in the former Soviet empire, or unfair trade practices, the threats and challenges we face demand cooperative, multinational solutions. Therefore, the only responsible U.S. strategy is one that seeks to ensure U.S. influence over participation in collective decision making in a wide and growing range of circumstances.

An important element of our security preparedness depends on durable relationships with allies and other friendly nations. Accordingly, a central thrust of our strategy of engagement is to sustain and adapt the security relationships we have with key nations around the world. These ties constitute an important part of an international framework that will be essential to ensuring cooperation across a broad range of issues. Within the realm of security issues, our cooperation with allies includes such activities as: conducting combined training and exercises, coordinating military plans and preparations, sharing intelligence, jointly developing new systems, and controlling exports of sensitive technologies according to common standards.

The post-Cold War era presents a different set of threats to our security. In this new period, enhancing American security requires, first and foremost, developing and maintaining a strong defense capability of forces ready to fight. We are developing integrated approaches for dealing with threats arising from the development of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction by other nations. Our security requires a vigorous arms control effort and a strong intelligence capability. We have implemented a strategy for multilateral peace operations. We have clarified rigorous guidelines for when and how to use military force in this era.

We also face security risks that are not solely military in nature. Transnational phenomena such as terrorism, narcotics trafficking, and refugee flows also have security implications both for present and long term American policy. An emerging class of transnational environmental and natural resource issues is increasingly affecting international stability and consequently will present new challenges to U.S. strategy. The threat of intrusions to our military and commercial information systems poses a significant risk to national security and must be addressed.

Maintaining a Strong Defense Capability

U.S. military capabilities are critical to the success of our strategy. This nation has unparalleled military capabilities: the United States is the only nation capable of conducting large-scale and effective military operations far beyond its borders. This fact, coupled with our unique position as the security partner of choice in many regions, provides a foundation for regional stability through mutually beneficial security partnerships. Our willingness and ability to play a leading role in defending common interests also help ensure that the United States will remain an influential voice in international affairs—political, military and economic—that affect our well-being, so long as we retain the military wherewithal to underwrite our commitments credibly.

To protect and advance U.S. interests in the face of the dangers and opportunities outlined earlier, the United States must deploy robust and flexible military forces that can accomplish a variety of tasks:

- **Deterring and Defeating Aggression in Major Regional Conflicts.** Our forces must be able to help offset the military power of regional states with interests opposed to those of the United States and its allies. To do this, we must be able to credibly deter and defeat aggression, by protecting and sustaining U.S. power in more than one region if necessary.
- **Providing a Credible Overseas Presence.** U.S. forces must also be forward deployed or stationed in key overseas regions in peacetime to deter aggression and advance U.S. strategic interests. Such overseas presence demonstrates our commitment to allies and friends, underwrites regional stability, gains us familiarity with overseas operating environments, promotes combined training among the forces of friendly countries, and prides timely initial response capabilities.
- **Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction.** We are devoting greater efforts to stemming the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery means, but at the same time we must improve our capabilities to deter and prevent the use of such weapons and protect ourselves against their effects.
- **Contributing to Multilateral Peace Operations.** When our interests call for it, the United States must also be prepared to participate in multilateral efforts to resolve regional conflicts and bolster new democratic governments. Thus, our forces must be ready to participate in peacekeeping, peace enforcement and other operations in support of these objectives.
- **Supporting Counterterrorism Efforts and Other National Security Objectives.** A number of other tasks remain that U.S. forces have typically carried out with both general purpose and specialized units. These missions include: counterterrorism and punitive attacks, noncombatant evacuation, counternarcotics operations, special forces assistance to nations, and humanitarian and disaster relief operations.

To meet all of these requirements successfully, our forces must be capable of responding quickly and operating effectively. That is, they must be ready to fight and win. This imperative demands highly qualified and motivated people; modern, well-maintained equipment; realistic training; strategic mobility; sufficient support and sustainment capabilities; and proper investment in science and technology.

Major Regional Contingencies

The focus of our planning for major theater conflict is on deterring and, if necessary, fighting and defeating aggression by potentially hostile regional powers, such as North Korea, Iran, or Iraq. Such states are capable of fielding sizable military forces that can cause serious imbalance in military power within regions important to the United States, with allied or friendly states often finding it difficult to match the power of a potentially aggressive neighbor. To deter aggression, prevent coercion of allied or friendly governments, and, ultimately, defeat aggression should it occur, we must prepare our forces to confront this scale of threat, preferably in concert with our allies and friends, but unilaterally if necessary. To do this, we must have forces that can deploy quickly and supplement U.S. forward based and forward deployed forces, along with regional allies, in halting an invasion and defeating the aggressor, just as we demonstrated by our rapid response in October 1994 when Iraq threatened aggression against Kuwait.

With programmed enhancements, the forces the Administration is fielding will be sufficient to help defeat aggression in two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts. As a nation with global interests, it is important that the United States maintain forces with aggregate capabilities on this scale. Obviously, we seek to avoid a situation in which an aggressor in one region might be tempted to take advantage when U.S. forces are heavily committed elsewhere. More basically, maintaining a "two war" force helps ensure that the United States will have sufficient military capabilities to deter or defeat aggression by a coalition of hostile powers or by a larger, more capable adversary than we foresee today.

We will never know with certainty how an enemy might fight or precisely what demands might be placed on our own forces in the future. The contributions of allies or coalition partners will vary from place to place and over time. Thus, balanced U.S. forces are needed in order to provide a wide range of complementary capabilities and to cope with the unpredictable and unexpected.

Overseas Presence

The need to deploy U.S. military forces abroad in peacetime is also an important factor in determining our overall force structure. We will maintain robust overseas presence in several forms, such as permanently stationed forces and pre-positioned equipment, deployments and combined exercises, port calls and other force visits, as well as military-to-military contacts. These activities provide several benefits. Specifically they:

- Give form and substance to our bilateral and multilateral security commitments.
- Demonstrate our determination to defend U.S. and allied interests in critical regions, deterring hostile nations from acting contrary to those interests.
- Provide forward elements for rapid response in crises as well as the bases, ports, and other infrastructure essential for deployment of U.S.-based forces by air, sea, and land.
- Enhance the effectiveness of coalition operations, including peace operations, by improving our ability to operate with other nations.
- Allow the United States to use its position of trust to prevent the development of power vacuums and dangerous arms races, thereby underwriting regional stability by precluding threats to regional security.

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- Facilitate regional integration, since nations that may not be willing to work together in our absence may be willing to coalesce around us in a crisis.
 - Promote an international security environment of trust, cooperation, peace, and stability, which is fundamental to the vitality of developing democracies and free market economies for America's own economic well-being and security.

Through training programs, combined exercises, military contacts, interoperability, and shared defense with potential coalition partners, as well as security assistance programs that include judicious foreign military sales, we can strengthen the local self-defense capabilities of our friends and allies. Through active participation in regional security dialogues, we can reduce regional tensions, increase transparency in armaments, and improve our bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

By improving the defense capabilities of our friends and demonstrating our commitment to defend common interests, these activities enhance deterrence, encourage responsibility-sharing on the part of friends and allies, decrease the likelihood that U.S. forces will be necessary if conflict arises, and raise the odds that U.S. forces will find a relatively favorable situation should a U.S. response be required.