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# SECURITY ASSISTANCE LEGISLATION AND POLICY

## 1991 National Security Strategy Report

President George Bush

[The following is a reprint of a statement by President Bush on August 13, 1991 at Kennebunkport, Maine, regarding the public release of the annual National Security Strategy Report. Also included is a reprint of a related press statement (fact sheet) released by the White House on the same day.]

Today I signed and forwarded to Congress the National Security Strategy Report for 1991. This report comes at a rare moment in history. Seldom if ever have we been offered such an opportunity—to build a new international system in accordance with our own values and ideals. The Cold War has at long last released its grip on world events. Democracy is coming to Eastern Europe. The Gulf war helped create an unprecedented consensus that aggressive force must not be used to settle disputes and that if it is, the international community will respond. More so than ever before, we have seen the United Nations play the role dreamed of by its founders. The United States and Soviet Union have signed a treaty that, for the first time, significantly reduces their strategic nuclear arsenals. Yet, for all these national and international triumphs, the world remains a volatile place, with ethnic antagonisms, national rivalries, religious tensions, spreading armaments, personal ambitions, and lingering authoritarianism. Our national security strategy reflects the significant achievements, sobering realities, and important opportunities that now confront us.

This report emphasizes the enduring political, economic, and military foundations of our national strategy, yet acknowledges the mandate for change in implementing elements of that strategy. While addressing our strategic relationship with the Soviet Union as an inescapable priority, we will work with our allies to respond to new political challenges, taking into account a more internally oriented and less threatening Soviet Union. While contributing to global stability as only America can, we will shift our focus to regional threats and peaceful engagement. While reducing nuclear and conventional force levels on the continent, we will work with our NATO allies to foster reconciliation, security, and democracy in a Europe whole and free. And, while providing adequately for our defense, our economic well-being will remain the foundation of our long-term strength.

Our response to strategic challenges has always been shaped by what we are as a people, for our values are the link between our past and our future, between our domestic life and our foreign policy, between our power and our purpose. Our responsibility as a nation remains not only to protect our citizens and our interests but also to help create a new world in which our fundamental ideals not only survive but flourish. That is the essence of our national security strategy.

I look to this report to be the foundation for a productive, nonpartisan, national dialogue as we continue to develop and articulate a strategic approach that will guide us safely into the 21st century.

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## Fact Sheet

The President today [August 13, 1991] transmitted to Congress the 1991 National Security Strategy Report, as required by the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols amendment to the National Security Act. The report reflects the recent, dramatic changes in the international environment and outlines U.S. policies to both shape and respond to these changes. It observes that we have reached a moment of historic opportunity—for us and for the world—to build a new international system in accordance with our own values and ideals. Highlights of the report include:

- Acknowledgement that the U.S. containment strategy which worked for 40 years must now be modified to reflect geo-strategic realities;
- Encouragement of the constructive evolution of the Soviet Union;
- Realization that U.S. alliances will be fundamentally affected by the internalization of the Soviet Union;
- Recognition that the world is increasingly interdependent—politically, economically, technologically, and militarily—but that U.S. leadership across the board remains essential;
- An emphasis on smaller, more agile forces to address regional concerns and peacetime engagement but which could form the basis for a reconstituted larger force should the need arise;
- Continued American support of an international economic system as open and inclusive as possible, and of NATO as the indispensable foundation of trans-Atlantic cooperation with a newly united and free Europe;
- Vigorous pursuit of U.S. policy toward the Middle East, acknowledging the new challenges and opportunities afforded us by our victory in the Gulf war;
- Recognition of the continuing importance of East Asia and the Pacific and the vital role our security ties play there;
- Enhanced support for a revitalized United Nations to help keep peace, improve the human condition, and ameliorate human suffering;
- Acknowledging through the Conventional Forces in Europe and Strategic Arms Reduction Talks treaties a steadfast commitment to arms control as a means to strengthen international stability;
- Renewed championing of the principles of political and economic freedom as the surest guarantors of human progress and global peace; and
- A new global agenda to deal with refugee flows, drug abuse, and environmental degradation.

The report underscores the enduring nature of our basic interests and objectives in the 1990s.

- The survival of the United States as a free and independent nation, with its fundamental values intact and its institutions and people secure.

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- A healthy and growing U.S. economy to ensure opportunity for individual prosperity and resources for national endeavors at home and abroad.
  - Healthy, cooperative, and politically vigorous relations with allies and friendly nations.
  - A stable and secure world where political and economic freedom, human rights, and democratic institutions flourish.

The report explains that our fundamental challenge is to relate political, economic, and military means available to these enduring goals in a world marked by extraordinarily positive change but still rampant with challenges and threats to our security—and to that of our allies and friends. The United States will remain fully engaged in the larger world and will continue to pursue its objectives in concert with those who share its values and concerns. Our approach to security will continue to be shaped by the fact that we are a nation separated by large oceans from many of our most important friends and interests. Defending them will still require the presence of American forces overseas, backed up by an ability to project power from the United States. The strategy report concludes with a call for continued dialogue, close cooperation and consultation with Congress to help shape a security structure appropriate for today's opportunities and tomorrow's challenges.