

Statement by Secretary of Defense on the Release of the FY 2015 Budget and 2014 QDR

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Statement by Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel on the Release of the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget and 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review

Today the president released his Fiscal Year 2015 budget request for the Department of Defense. This defense budget contains the recommendations I announced last week and is responsible, balanced and realistic. It matches our strategy to our resources.

This budget also supports - and is informed by - our updated defense strategy outlined in the recently completed 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), which is also being released today. This QDR defines the historic transition unfolding throughout our defense enterprise. As we move off the longest continuous war footing in our nation's history, this QDR explains how we will adapt, reshape, and rebalance our military for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

The QDR prioritizes America's highest security interests by focusing on three strategic pillars: defending the homeland against all threats; building security globally by projecting U.S. influence and deterring aggression; and remaining prepared to win decisively against any adversary should deterrence fail.

The QDR outlines key missions of our strategy - including the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific, sustaining our security commitments in the Middle East and Europe, and building partnership capacity throughout the world.

The QDR highlights the critical capabilities - enduring and emerging - the military will need to operate across the full spectrum of conflict - including special operations, space, cyber, missile defense as well as certain conventional, high-intensity capabilities we should emphasize in today's fast moving security environment. It also recognizes the emerging technological capabilities of adversaries that will present new threats and challenges to the United States.

This year's QDR also considers resource constraints. These continued fiscal constraints cannot be ignored. It would be dishonest and irresponsible to present a QDR articulating a strategy disconnected from the reality of resource constraints. A strategy must have the resources for its implementation.

Today's world requires a strategy that is neither budget driven nor budget blind. We need a strategy that can be implemented with a realistic level of resources, and that is what this QDR provides.

This QDR clearly articulates the consequences - and risks - of budgetary constraints. In particular, it shows that sequestration-level cuts would result in unacceptable risks to our national security if they are re-imposed in Fiscal Year 2016, as is currently the law. The QDR shows that continued sequestration requires dangerous reductions to readiness and modernization. It would mean that DoD would be unable to fulfill its defense strategy, and it would put at risk America's traditional role as a guarantor of global security.

That's why the president's budget plan adds \$115 billion above sequestration levels. These additional resources will be required to meet the president's defense strategy, although we will still be assuming higher risk for certain military missions because of continued fiscal constraints. It would have been irresponsible not to request these additional resources.

No strategy or budget is risk-free. Even the largest defense budgets have limits - as does our knowledge and ability to predict the future. But the strategy articulated by the QDR is one that department leaders and I believe is the right strategy given the reality we face.

There are difficult decisions ahead, but there are also opportunities. We have an opportunity to reshape our defense enterprise to be better prepared, positioned, and equipped to secure America's interests in the years ahead.

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