

For Immediate Release
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Progress in the War on Terror

[en Español](#)

Today's Presidential Action

- The President today announced a 9.7% increase in government-wide homeland security funding in his FY 2005 budget, nearly tripling the FY 2001 levels (excluding the Department of Defense and Project BioShield).
 - The President's budget will propose increasing counterterrorism funding through the Department of Justice to \$2.6 billion, a 19% increase over FY 2004 levels. The additional Department of Justice resources will put more FBI agents to work on counterterrorism activities, bringing overall FBI funding to \$5.1 billion - a \$1.9 billion (60%) increase over FY 2001 levels. The additional resources will also strengthen the FBI's intelligence capabilities and support the interagency Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC), announced by President Bush in last year's State of the Union Address.
 - Since 2001, the Federal government has provided more than \$13 billion to help state and local governments prepare for terrorism.
- Over two years have passed since the last attack on American soil, but the danger is still clear. As President Bush reminded the Nation in his State of the Union Address, "[I]t is tempting to believe that the danger is behind us. That hope is understandable, comforting -- and false." President Bush, joined by a bipartisan majority in Congress, made the decision that we would not stand by and wait for another attack. Instead, America has taken the fight to the terrorists.
- America's steadfast resolve is paying dividends. Terrorists are being rounded up, regimes that harbor and sponsor them have been defeated, and states pursuing weapons of mass destruction are getting the message. At the same time, America will redouble its efforts to spread democracy and freedom as alternatives to terror and violence.

Background: Significant Progress in the War on Terror Protecting Our Homeland

- Under President Bush's leadership, America has made an unprecedented commitment to homeland security, including leading the most extensive reorganization of the Federal government in 50 years by creating the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS is working to protect our skies, borders, ports, and critical infrastructure as well as supporting the new intelligence mission and providing research to develop the next generation of terrorism countermeasures.
- Before DHS was created, there were inspectors from three different agencies of the Federal

Government and Border Patrol officers protecting our borders. Through DHS, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) now consolidates all border activities into a single agency to create "one face at the border." This not only better secures the borders of the United States, but it also eliminates many of the inefficiencies that occurred under the old system. With over 18,000 CBP inspectors and 11,000 Border Patrol agents, CBP has 29,000 uniformed officers on our borders.

- Since September 11, 2001, the Coast Guard has conducted more than 124,000 port security patrols, 13,000 air patrols, boarded more than 92,000 vessels, interdicted over 14,000 individuals attempting to enter the United States illegally, and created and maintained more than 90 Maritime Security Zones.
- In less than a year, over 45,000 Federal security screeners were hired, trained, and deployed at America's airports. All people and their baggage are now being professionally inspected prior to flying.
- Information regarding nearly 100% of all containerized cargo is carefully screened by DHS before it arrives in the United States. Higher risk shipments are physically inspected for terrorist weapons and contraband prior to being released from the port of entry.
- Advanced technologies are being deployed to identify warning signs of chemical, biological, or radiological attacks. Since September 11, 2001, hundreds of thousands of first responders across America have been trained to recognize and respond to the effects of a WMD attack.
- In the past year, DHS has visited several hundred chemical facilities in high-threat urban areas and has identified measures to improve their security. As a result, millions of Americans are safer today.
- The Terrorist Threat Integration Center (TTIC) has been established, integrating and analyzing terrorism threat-related information collected domestically and abroad, ensuring that intelligence and law enforcement entities are working in common purpose.
- The Terrorist Screening Center was established to consolidate terrorist watchlists and provide 24/7 operational support for thousands of Federal screeners across the country and around the world. The Center will ensure that government investigators, screeners, and agents are working off the same unified, comprehensive set of anti-terrorist information - and that they have access to information and expertise that will allow them to act quickly when a suspected terrorist is screened or stopped. The Center began operations on December 1, 2003, and remains on schedule to achieve full operational capability in 2004.
- The USA PATRIOT ACT provides authorities that strengthen law enforcement's abilities to prevent, investigate, and prosecute acts of terror, facilitating Federal government efforts to thwart potential terrorist activity throughout the United States. President Bush, in his State of the Union Address, called on Congress to take action to ensure that these vital law enforcement tools do not expire.

Dismantling the Al-Qaida Network

- Leader by leader and member by member, Al-Qaida is being hunted down in dozens of countries around the world. Of the senior al-Qaida leaders, operational managers, and key facilitators the U.S. Government has been tracking, nearly two-thirds have been taken into custody or killed. The detentions or deaths of senior al-Qaida leaders, including Khalid Shaykh Muhammad, the mastermind of 9/11, and Muhammad Atef, Usama Bin Ladin's second-in-command until his death in late 2001, have been important in the War on Terror.

- Despite these successes, we cannot rest until al-Qaida has been fully dismantled. Al-Qaida has claimed responsibility for recent terrorist attacks in Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Al-Qaida supporters have been arrested in the United States - including in Buffalo, New York, and Portland, Oregon - a clear sign that the terrorists are still plotting to strike America again.

Freeing the Afghan People and Denying Refuge to Terrorists

- In Afghanistan, the Taliban regime, which turned the country into a training camp for al-Qaida, has been removed from power. America and more than 20 other allied countries are continuing operations against Al-Qaida and Taliban elements in the region while helping the Afghan people rebuild their nation.
 - More than 15 million Afghan citizens have been freed from the brutal zealotry of the Taliban. Millions of Afghan women are experiencing freedom for the first time, and thousands of Afghan girls are going to school an act that was illegal under the Taliban regime.
 - The United States led the world in providing humanitarian assistance and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. The U.S. Congress passed the Afghanistan Freedom Support Act, which authorizes \$3.47 billion for Afghanistan over fiscal years 2003-2006. More than 400,000 metric tons of food have been delivered since operations in Afghanistan began. The United States is assisting in the repair of more than 7,000 kilometers of roads, reconstruction of more than 70 bridges, and the rehabilitation of over 11,000 water wells, canals, dams, and water systems.
 - Security and stability are improving as the new Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police grow in size. The central government is gradually but surely extending its authority throughout the country. And the U.S. military is helping the Afghan people help themselves through provincial reconstruction teams (PRTs), which carry out both civil-military operations and security functions. Twelve ANA battalions consisting of 6,000 troops have been trained and are on full-time duty, with a goal of 10,000 by June 2004 and 70,000 eventually. The ANA is a disciplined fighting force capable of conducting both combat and civil-military-affairs, and is currently helping coalition forces hunt down remnants of the Taliban regime.

Making Real Progress in Iraq - the Front Lines of the War on Terror

- In Iraq, the United States and its allies liberated 25 million people from the Saddam Hussein regime. Since then, working with our allies and the Iraqi people themselves, we have discovered:
 - Clear evidence that Saddam Hussein was in material breach of UN Security Council Resolution 1441, a last chance that promised "serious consequences" if Saddam refused full and immediate cooperation with international weapons inspections.
 - Previously unknown human rights atrocities, including at least 50 mass graves where an estimated 300,000 victims of Saddam's vicious regime are buried; torture chambers and rape rooms run by the Iraqi secret police; and systematic oppression of Iraqi civilians.
 - More evidence of Iraq's links to international terrorism, including first-hand accounts of high-level meetings between Iraqi Intelligence Service officials and al-Qaida.
- Working with the Iraqi people and a broad international coalition, America is helping to bring

peace, stability, and democracy to Iraq.

- Forty-five of the 55 most wanted regime members have been captured or killed, including the dictator himself - Saddam Hussein. The capture of Saddam Hussein sent a powerful message to the Iraqi people that the tyranny of the past will never return.
- America's Armed Forces are taking the offensive against remnants of the Saddam Hussein regime and foreign terrorists, leading over 1,600 patrols a day and conducting an average of 180 raids a week. More than 200,000 Iraqis are serving in Iraqi security forces, including police, border patrol, and the New Iraqi Army.
- A broad coalition of nations is providing support for efforts to stabilize and rebuild Iraq. More than 30 countries, including 11 of the 19 NATO countries, have provided over 24,000 troops to help provide security in Iraq. The international community has pledged at least \$32 billion to improve schools, health care, roads, water and electricity supplies, agriculture, and other essential services. The World Bank, International Monetary Fund, the European Union, and 38 countries have pledged to extend loans and grants to Iraq. Other nations are contributing humanitarian assistance, extending export credits, and reducing Iraqi debt. This international support is crucial to improving the lives of the Iraqi people and reversing the years of neglect under Saddam Hussein's regime.
- The Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) is leading the transition to full Iraqi sovereignty and democracy. The IGC will draft a "Fundamental Law" by February 28, 2004, through which regional caucuses will select an interim legislative body before June 2004. This interim body will then elect a transitional Iraqi Administration to which full sovereign powers will be conveyed by the end of June 2004. The Fundamental Law will also contain a timetable for: formulating a permanent constitution through a body elected by the Iraqi people; holding a popular referendum to ratify the constitution; and conducting elections for a new permanent Iraqi government before the end of 2005.

Setting the Conditions for Long-Term Peace

- America's steadfast resolve is paying dividends, sending a clear signal to other nations about the consequences of developing illegal weapons programs and supporting terror. Just last month, after months of diplomatic negotiations, Libya voluntarily pledged to disclose and dismantle all of its weapons of mass destruction programs, including a uranium enrichment project for nuclear weapons.
- In the long term, America's goal is not only to stabilize Iraq and Afghanistan, but to bring freedom and democracy to those countries and throughout the Middle East. President Bush announced that the United States would pursue a "forward strategy of freedom" to promote democracy throughout the Middle East. Promoting democracy and freedom in the Middle East is a challenging undertaking, but it is worthy of America's effort and sacrifice. As long as freedom and democracy do not flourish in the Middle East, that region will remain stagnant, resentful, and violent - and serve as an exporter of violence and terror to free nations.
- President Bush believes that democracy and Islam can co-exist. America has accomplished the task of spreading democracy where it has not existed before, and the President believes that the advance of freedom will increase chances for peace and security for Americans as well as for the people of the Middle East. To support this effort, the President proposed a doubling of funding for the National Endowment for Democracy.

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