



THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

[Home](#) > [News & Policies](#) > [December 2008](#)

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Fact Sheet: Transforming Our Armed Forces to Face the Threats of Today and Tomorrow

Over The Past Eight Years, America's Military Has Become Stronger, More Agile, And Better Prepared To Confront Threats To The American People

[President Bush Discusses Defense Transformation at West Point](#)

[In Focus: Defense](#)

Today, President Bush visited the United States Military Academy and discussed the ways he and his Administration have retooled the U.S. military over the past eight years. Following the attacks of 9/11, President Bush strengthened and reshaped our approach to national security. To harden our defense, President Bush:

- Created the Department of Homeland Security;
 - Provided national security professionals with vital new tools like the Patriot Act and a program to monitor terrorist communications;
 - Reorganized the intelligence community to better meet the needs of the war on terror;
 - Deployed aggressive financial measures to freeze terrorist assets; and
 - Launched diplomatic initiatives to pressure adversaries and attract new partners to our cause.
- **The President made dramatic changes to both our national security strategy and the military itself.** President Bush concluded that we are engaged in an ideological struggle and launched an effort to discredit the hateful vision of the extremists and advance the hopeful alternative of freedom. In order to stay a step ahead of our enemies, the Administration transformed our military both to prevail on the battlefields of today and to meet the threats of tomorrow.

The President Has Transformed Our Military To Become Better Trained, Better Equipped, And Better Prepared For The Threats Of Today, Tomorrow, And Beyond

The United States is arming its troops with the intelligence, weapons, training, and support they need to face a different kind of enemy. The President has equipped our troops with real-time battlefield intelligence capabilities – unimaginable just a few years ago. In Iraq and Afghanistan, troops in the field have used advanced technologies like Global Positioning Systems to direct airstrikes that take out the enemy while sparing the innocent, and the Administration is arming Predator drones and using them to track down terrorists. When President Bush took office, the United States had fewer than 170 unmanned aerial vehicles. Today, that number has expanded to more than 6,000.

- **The Administration has expanded the U.S. Special Operations Forces.** President Bush has more than doubled funding for special operations and created the first-ever special operations command within the Marines. Additionally, he has given the Special Operations Command the lead role in the global war on terror.
- **Under the President's leadership, the United States has also placed a new focus on counterinsurgency.** General David Petraeus wrote a new counterinsurgency manual published by the Army, with central objectives to gain the support of the people and train local forces to take responsibility on their own. The counterinsurgency strategy also stresses the importance of following security gains with real benefits into the daily lives of citizens.
 - The Administration created Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), which are helping local communities in Iraq and Afghanistan to create jobs, deliver basic services, and prevent terrorists from returning.
- **The President has transformed the education and training U.S. troops receive.** Every branch of the military now receives the counterinsurgency training that was once reserved for Special Operations Forces.

Additionally, the President has been transforming the military to confront the challenges ahead. This Administration began the most sweeping transformation of America's global force posture since the end of World War II. Troops are shifting from Cold War garrisons in Europe and Asia, in order to surge more rapidly to troubled spots around the world. President Bush established new military commands to meet challenges unique to Africa and protect the United States. This Administration has also invested more than a half trillion dollars in research and development, to build even more advanced capabilities to protect America. U.S. forces are becoming more joint and interoperable, in order to cooperate seamlessly across different services and with foreign partners. Additionally, the Federal Government is cooperating closely with the private sector to improve security in cyberspace to confront an emerging threat to the U.S. economy, defense systems, and citizens.

- **In 2001, President Bush withdrew the United States from the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty.** As a result, America has developed and deployed new defenses capable of protecting U.S. cities from ballistic missile attack. This system can now defend the United States against limited missile attacks from Northeast Asia. The United States has also concluded agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic to establish missile defense sites on their territories to help protect against ballistic missile attacks from the Middle East.
- **The President also worked with Russia to make historic reductions in offensive nuclear weapons.** Following these reductions, the total U.S. nuclear stockpile will be at the lowest level since the Eisenhower Administration. These reductions are part of a new approach to strategic deterrence that relies on both nuclear and conventional strike forces, as well as strong defenses.

Thanks To Our Military, Terrorists Have Suffered Defeats Across The World

Under President Bush, the United States went on the offense against the terrorists overseas, rather than wait for our country to be attacked again. Recognizing the need for strong partners, we helped strengthen the counterterrorism capabilities of our allies and made clear that hostile regimes sponsoring terror or pursuing weapons of mass destruction would be held to account. The United States and its allies have applied the full range of our military and intelligence assets to keep pressure on al Qaeda and its affiliates. They have:

- Severely weakened the terrorists;

- Disrupted plots to attack our homeland; and
- Captured or killed hundreds of al Qaeda leaders and operatives in more than two dozen countries, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the 9/11 attacks.

The United States has helped key partners and allies strengthen their capabilities in the fight against the terrorists. Intelligence sharing has increased with friends and allies around the world, and training and support has been provided to counterterrorism partners who have made substantial contributions to the war on terror, such as the Philippines, Indonesia, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia.

President Bush has made clear that governments that sponsor terror are as guilty as the terrorists and will be held to account. Following 9/11, the President applied this doctrine to Afghanistan and removed the Taliban from power, shut down al Qaeda training camps, and liberated more than 25 million Afghans. Today, the United States, its 25 NATO allies, and 17 partner nations are standing with the Afghan people as they defend their free society.

- **In Iraq, the United States acted with a coalition of nations to protect the American people and liberated more than 25 million Iraqis.** Just last week, Iraq approved two agreements that formalize diplomatic, economic, and security ties with America, and set a framework for the drawdown of American forces as the fight in Iraq nears a successful end.

Recognizing that the only way to defeat the terrorists in the long run is to present an alternative to their hateful ideology, the United States is helping democratic societies emerge as examples for people across the Middle East. President Bush is pressing nations around the world – including our friends – to allow their citizens to have greater freedom of speech, worship, and assembly. Additionally, the Administration is advancing a broader vision of reform that includes economic prosperity, quality health care and education, vibrant civil societies, and women's rights.

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