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Obama Announces Thrust of His Plans for Our Future Military. President Obama met today at the Pentagon with Defense Secretary Panetta and JCS Chairman Gen. Dempsey and unveiled some general aspects of his future military strategy. This strategy reflects plans to greatly cut future defense expenditures. Although specific details will not be unveiled until next month when the President reveals his FY 2013 Budget plans, announcements today included:

- The U.S. military will be “leaner” but will still maintain international military superiority.
- Will cut hundreds of billions of dollars in defense expenditures.
- Will avoid mistakes of the past that weakened our military in inappropriate ways.
- Will move away from the long-standing doctrine of maintaining a capability to fight two sustained ground wars at one time; but will plan to “fight and win one war, spoil the military aspirations of another adversary in a different region of the world, and all the while be able to conduct humanitarian relief operations and other contingencies, like continuing counterterrorism missions and enforcing a no-fly zone.”
- Will end “long-term nation-building with large military footprints,” focusing instead on pursuing a national security strategy based on “smaller conventional forces.”
- Will reduce the U.S. military footprint in Europe and refocus on threats in the Asia-Pacific region with reduced on-the-ground effort in Middle East.
- Will continue to invest in counterterrorism, intelligence gathering, cyberwarfare and countering the proliferation of nuclear weapons.
- There will be a probable 10 to 15 percent end strength reduction to the Army and Marine Corps over the next decade.
- Won’t cut any of the Navy’s 11 aircraft carriers.
- Will propose cuts to next-generation weapons, including delays in purchases of F-35 Joint Strike Fighters.
- Will also look at significant personnel cost reductions with a focus on future retirement benefit changes and significantly higher healthcare fees for “working age” military retirees.

Note: According to the Defense Manpower Data Center, as of September 2011, there were 1,219,995 military personnel in the U.S. and its territories; 207,670 in North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia; 80,718 in Europe; 55,671 in East Asia and the Pacific; 1,965 in

South America and the Caribbean; 654 in Sub-Saharan Africa; and 160 in the Former Soviet Union.

Defense Secretary Panetta noted in speaking of the new strategy that future budgets will mean smaller U.S. forces and some greater risk. According to a *CBS News* Article Panetta said that the new national defense strategy addresses two issues at once. It streamlines the military in an era of tighter budgets and reassesses defense priorities in light of China's rise and other global changes. To read the CBS article, go to: http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-201_162-57353032/panetta-smaller-military-means-more-risk/

A *Reuters* article on the upcoming strategic changes is available at:
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/04/us-usa-military-obama-idUSTRE8031Z020120104>

To read the President's brief whitepaper outline entitled "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense" go to:
<http://graphics8.nytimes.com/packages/pdf/us/20120106-PENTAGON.PDF>

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