

World Military Expenditure Increases Despite Financial Crisis

SIPRI Yearbook 2010

By [SIPRI](#)

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Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

Stockholm — Worldwide military expenditure in 2009 totalled an estimated \$1531 billion, according to new figures released today by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). This represents an increase of 5.9% in real terms compared to 2008 and an increase of 49% since 2000. SIPRI today launches the 2010 edition of its Yearbook on Armaments, Disarmament and International Security. In addition to the release of its much anticipated military expenditure figures, Yearbook 2010 offers an authoritative account and analysis of recent developments in a number of security-related fields. The global financial crisis, the conflict in Afghanistan, and nuclear weapons and disarmament are among some of this year's cross-cutting security themes.

Download the story packages for media on [military expenditure](#), [Afghanistan](#) and [nuclear issues](#), read the press release in [Swedish](#) and [French](#).

Strategic military choices in hard economic times

The far-reaching effects of the global financial crisis and economic recession appear to have had little impact on world military expenditure. The USA, with a real-terms increase of \$47 billion, accounted for 54% of the world increase in military expenditure. Although the USA led the rise, it was not alone (see figure 1). Of those countries for which data was available, 65% increased their military spending in real terms in 2009. In an analysis by region, Asia and Oceania showed the fastest real-terms increase with 8.9%.

‘Many countries were increasing public spending generally in 2009, as a way of boosting demand to combat the recession. Although military spending wasn’t usually a major part of the economic stimulus packages, it wasn’t cut either’, explains Dr Sam Perlo-Freeman, Head of the Military Expenditure Project at SIPRI. ‘The figures also demonstrate that for major or intermediate powers such as the USA, China, Russia, India and Brazil military spending represents a long-term strategic choice which they are willing to make even in hard economic times.’

Taking stock in Afghanistan

There were a total of 54 peace operations in 2009, and the known cost of peace operations reached a new high of \$9.1 billion. The number of personnel deployed to such operations also reached a record 219 278 (89% military personnel, 11% civilian)—a jump of 16% over

2008. The increase was due to troop reinforcement for existing peace operations, most significantly for the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan.

In 2009 the USA more than doubled its troop levels in Afghanistan and annual US spending in Afghanistan now exceeds that in Iraq—\$65 billion was proposed for Afghanistan, compared with \$61 billion for Iraq in the financial year 2010 budget request. Strategic efforts focused on counterterrorism, counternarcotics and the strengthening of the Afghan security forces. Nevertheless, the prospects for a decisive military victory for either the insurgency or the Afghan Government and its international backers were bleak in 2009.

Efforts to enable a political dialogue with the Taliban continued to gain momentum within the international community and the Afghan Government, but ‘Unless the Taliban judge their position is weakening, they are unlikely to fully commit to any form of political settlement’, states SIPRI Researcher Tim Foxley ‘and the international community is clearly weary of the struggle: two NATO members have already unilaterally decided to pull out. There is a tangible and growing sense of “end game” in and around Afghanistan that is likely to intensify over the next 12 months’.

Nuclear weapon arsenals in 2009

SIPRI estimates that there were around 7500 operational nuclear warheads in the arsenals of the eight nuclear-armed states (the USA, Russia, China, the UK, France, India, Pakistan and Israel). Of these, almost 2000 were kept on high alert and capable of being launched in minutes. Global efforts to reduce or eliminate these weapons moved forward despite a number of setbacks.

On the SIPRI Yearbook 2010

In addition to SIPRI Yearbook 2010’s informative, ongoing coverage of perennial security issues, this year’s highlights include:

- an assessment of the practical steps that states must take if they are serious about nuclear disarmament by former US diplomat and disarmament expert James E. Goodby;
- an expanded analysis of data released earlier in the year on the top 100 arms producing companies (excluding Chinese companies) and the latest trends in international arms transfers; and
- extensive appendices and annexes that provide further data and documentation on major armed conflict and multilateral peace operations, arms control and non-proliferation.

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