



Cohen Announces Plan To Augment Missile Defense Programs

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen announced today that the Defense Department plans to allocate additional funds to National Missile Defense (NMD) and Theater Missile Defense (TMD) programs to meet the growing ballistic missile threats from rogue states to U.S. forces deployed overseas and potentially to U.S. territory.

The new budget will request additions of \$6.6 billion to current NMD funding levels for a total of \$10.5 billion for NMD through Fiscal Year 2005. No decision to deploy a national missile defense system will be made before 2000. In theater missile defense, the new budget will continue flight testing of the Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) program and add money to the Navy Theater Wide program in order to allow accelerated deployment of an upper-tier system by 2007.

"The Department of Defense has long worked to ensure that our NMD development program was properly funded. But until now, the Department has budgeted no funds to support a possible deployment of a limited NMD system," Secretary Cohen said.

"Since we intend to make a critical decision in June 2000 regarding deployment, the budget we will submit in February will increase NMD by \$6.6 billion, including the cost associated with NMD deployment over the Future Years Defense Plan. This includes \$800 million provided by Congress in the FY99 supplemental appropriations bill and nearly triples, to \$10.5

billion, the amount we are budgeting National Missile Defense," he said.

Last summer, the Department of Defense embarked upon a ballistic missile defense program review that assessed the evolving missile defense environment. The review addressed both the expanding threats from medium-range ballistic missiles and the emerging threat from long-range missiles.

"We are affirming that there is a growing threat and that it will pose a danger not only to our troops overseas, but also to Americans here at home," said Cohen. "Last spring, a commission chaired by former Secretary Donald Rumsfeld provided a sobering analysis of the nature of the threat and of limitations on our ability to predict how rapidly it will change. Then, on Aug. 31, [1998], North Korea launched a Taepo-Dong 1 missile. That missile test demonstrated important aspects of intercontinental missile development, including multiple-stage separation, and unexpectedly included the use of a third stage. The Taepo-Dong 1 test was another strong indicator that the United States will, in fact, face a rogue nation missile threat to our homeland against which we will have to defend the American people."

A Deployment Readiness Review is scheduled for summer 2000 in order to assess the NMD program's progress and to provide information for a deployment decision.

"Our deployment readiness program has had two key criteria that must be satisfied before

we could make a decision to deploy a limited National Missile Defense: There must be a threat to warrant the deployment, and our NMD development must have proceeded sufficiently so that we are technologically ready to deploy," Cohen said. "What we are saying today is that we now expect the first criterion will soon be met, and technological readiness will be the primary remaining criterion."

If deployment requires an amendment to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, the United States will negotiate with the Russians in good faith. "While our NMD development program is being conducted consistent with the terms of the ABM Treaty, our deployment may require modifications to the treaty, and the administration is working to determine the nature and scope of these modifications," Cohen said. "We have already begun environmental site surveys for potential basing sites in both Alaska and North Dakota, and we have briefed Russian officials on these activities," Cohen said.

Secretary Cohen also announced steps to advance the Theater Missile Defense program, which is designed to protect our troops and allies from short- and medium-range missiles. The Department recognizes the critical importance of both land-based and sea-based upper-tier systems in the overall TMD architecture.

Money will be added to the Navy Theater Wide program to move it from the development to the acquisition phase. The land-based Theater High Altitude Area Defense program will continue flight testing. However, recognizing the development problems associated with THAAD,

and the very difficult task inherent in ballistic missile defense technology, both Navy Theater Wide and THAAD will be examined after initial flight testing to determine system progress. Based on this assessment, the Department will be prepared to reallocate upper-tier program resources to focus on the most successful program. To meet the existing and emerging threat, our objective is to field an upper-tier system capability by 2007. This would be an acceleration for either system. Currently, THAAD is scheduled for deployment in 2008 and NTW in 2010.

In addition, the Department will propose to restructure the Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS) program — a cooperative program with our German and Italian allies — to develop the essential technologies for critical maneuver force protection requirements.

"These new initiatives will help to ensure that we will meet existing and rapidly emerging ballistic missile threats as quickly and effectively as possible, and in a manner that is integrated with our overall defense requirements," Cohen said.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news> on the Internet.