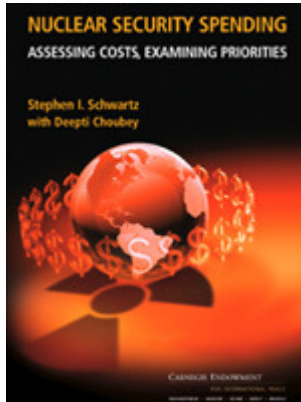
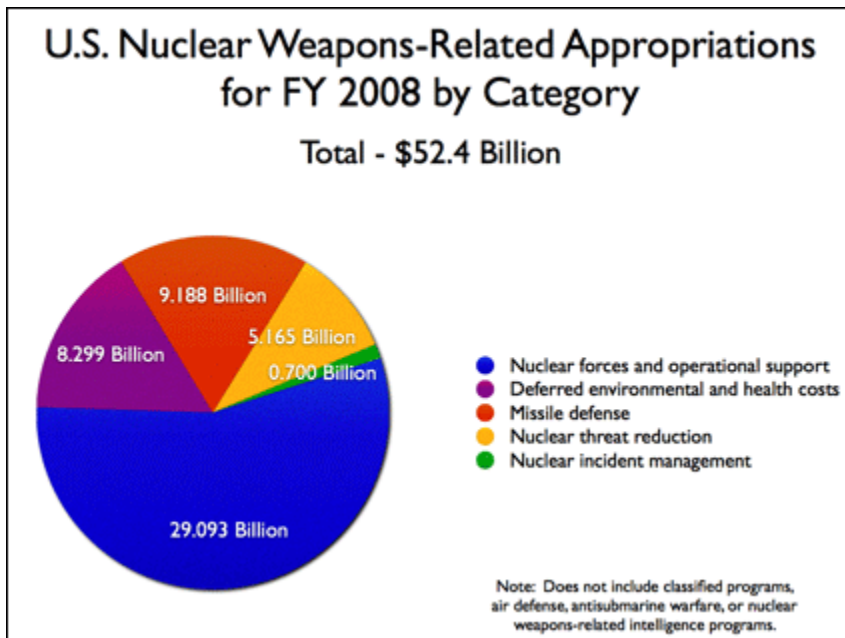


# Nuclear Security Spending: Assessing Costs, Examining Priorities

Stephen I. Schwartz, [Deepti Choubey](#) Carnegie Endowment Report, January 2009



The United States spent over \$52 billion on nuclear weapons and related programs in fiscal year 2008, but only 10 percent of that went toward preventing a nuclear attack through slowing and reversing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology. That is the main finding of *Nuclear Security Spending: Assessing Costs, Examining Priorities*, a new study that uses publicly available documents and extensive interviews with government officials and experts to calculate the U.S. nuclear security "budget." The United States has never tracked nuclear weapons-related spending comprehensively, hindering effective oversight and weighing of priorities in nuclear security policy.



The lack of comprehensive accounting impairs balancing of priorities and fosters the impression that the United States is more interested in preserving and upgrading its nuclear arsenal than in reducing and eliminating the growing threats of nuclear proliferation and limited nuclear or radiological attack. Because classified expenditures and some other relevant costs are omitted from the analysis, total actual spending is significantly higher.

### **Key Conclusions**

- Only 1.3 percent (\$700 million) of the nuclear security budget was devoted to preparing for the consequences of a nuclear or radiological attack.
- Another 56 percent of the total went toward operating, sustaining, and upgrading the U.S. nuclear arsenal.
- Nuclear security consumes \$13 billion more than international diplomacy and foreign assistance; nearly double what the United States allots for general science, space, and technology; and 14 times what the Department of Energy (DOE) budgets for all energy-related research and development.
- Nuclear weapons and weapons-related programs account for at least 67 percent of DOE's budget, 8.5 percent of the FBI's budget, 7.1 percent of the Department of Defense budget, and 1.7 percent of the Department of Homeland Security's budget.