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Pentagon Orders Multi-Billion Dollar Revamp of US Nuke Arsenal

November 17, 2014

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel has announced a multi-billion dollar overhaul of US nuclear forces after reviews uncovered serious flaws.

Hagel told reporters on Friday at the Pentagon that there had been a “consistent lack of investment and support” over “far too many years”.

He said the Defense Department will increase spending on the management of the US nuclear arsenal by about 10 percent a year for the next five years. The nuclear weapons forces reportedly cost over \$15 billion annually.

“The internal and external reviews I ordered show that a consistent lack of investment and support for our nuclear forces over far too many years has left us with too little margin to cope with mounting stresses,” said Hagel.

“The root cause has been a lack of sustained focus, attention and resources, resulting in a pervasive sense that a career in the nuclear enterprise offers too few opportunities for growth and advancement,” he added.

Earlier this year, Hagel ordered two reviews of the nuclear arms program following a series of media reports revealed lapses in leadership, morale, safety and security at America's several nuclear air force bases.

Earlier this month, the US Air Force dismissed two senior commanders from its nuclear missile corps on the grounds of indiscipline and misconduct.

Commenting on the news, an American activist and expert on military affairs said the US Air Force's frustrated, demoralized and alcoholic officers have their fingers on the nation's nuclear buttons.

"And it's frightening when you think about the people that are manning the nuclear weapons infrastructure in the United States are in such a bad condition. It is very frightening," said Bruce Gagnon, coordinator of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, from Bath, Maine.