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## Obama Budget Fiscal 2010: State and Foreign Operations

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The international affairs portion of President Obama's fiscal 2010 budget proposes a hefty boost for the strapped Foreign Service and diplomatic corps, part of his strategy to elevate diplomacy and development in U.S. foreign policy.

The \$52 billion request for the State Department and foreign aid programs would total 27 percent more than the \$40.9 billion enacted in fiscal 2009. This difference would shrink, however, if Congress enacts the fiscal 2009 supplemental spending bill it is now working on, which includes \$10.4 billion for foreign affairs programs.

Many foreign affairs items in Obama's 2010 request appear large when compared with regular 2009 spending but actually represent modest bumps — or even decreases — when emergency and supplemental spending is taken into account.

In a break from the Bush administration, Obama has said he wants to include all spending as part of the baseline budget in future years, in an effort to improve oversight, though he has not done so in his first year. For now, making comparisons between the 2010 request and 2009 appropriations is difficult because the latest 2009 supplemental has not been enacted.

Obama's request includes \$8.96 billion for the State Department's main account for diplomatic, consular and security programs overseas, a 15 percent increase over fiscal 2009 spending, including emergency and supplemental funds already enacted this year. Likewise, the U.S. Agency for International Development's operating expenses budget would jump to \$1.4 billion, or 60 percent over enacted 2009 levels.

The request also includes \$323 million, a four-fold boost, for a civilian corps focused on implementing and coordinating reconstruction and stabilization efforts overseas.

Obama also seeks a boost for direct bilateral aid. The bilateral economic support fund would rise 58 percent to \$6.5 billion, from \$4.1 billion in 2009. And the request includes \$4.1 billion in foreign aid for Afghanistan and \$2 billion for Pakistan.

Foreign military financing would rise slightly, from \$4.9 billion to \$5.3 billion, a 7 percent climb. The request does not designate those funds for specific countries.

International drug-control programs would nearly double to \$2 billion in the request. The request also includes \$450 million for the Merida Initiative, a Bush-era program aimed at combating illegal drugs in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Obama's request would eliminate a democracy promotion fund that received \$116 million in 2009, but he would create a \$76 million "Rapid Response Fund" to support new and fragile democracies.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation, a global poverty-reduction program started under President George W. Bush, would get \$1.4 billion, a nearly two-thirds increase from the \$875 million it received in 2009.

Meanwhile, U.S. contributions to U.N. peacekeeping operations would jump 36 percent to \$2.3 billion.

The account that pays U.N. dues would get \$1.8 billion for fiscal 2010 under Obama's request, a 12 percent increase over the \$1.6 billion appropriated in 2009.

On development and health, the request would fold State and USAID global-health programs into one account, funding it at \$2.3 billion. The budget proposal would maintain a ban on funding overseas abortions but would recommend \$50 million for the U.N. Population Fund, a frequent target of anti-abortion members of Congress.

The president's plan also calls for \$5.3 billion for global AIDS efforts, part of a total of \$6.6 billion in the request for global AIDS programs across the federal government.