

U.S. Senate approves mammoth military budget

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Soldiers at the U.S. Army Air Assault School conduct training while adhering to coronavirus disease (COVID-19) recommendations, at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. (Photo: Reuters)

Washington, December 12 (RHC)-- The United States Senate has approved a massive annual military budget amid forecasts of a new Cold War. The Senate passed the \$741 billion bill to fund U.S. military forces fighting major world powers.

China and Russia have joined Iran to express strong opposition to the “U.S. unilateralism” in international affairs. Known as the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the bill authorizes US military spending and outlines Pentagon policy.

With 84 votes, the annual defense bill surpassed the two-thirds majority that would be needed to defeat US President Donald Trump’s promised veto of the NDAA bill. The NDAA bill usually gets the Senate approval vote with strong bipartisan support and veto-proof majorities.

Earlier this month, Trump threatened to veto the must-pass military budget if lawmakers did not include a measure eliminating legal protections for social media companies such as Facebook and Twitter. Trump is demanding that a federal law, known as Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which protects “Big Tech” companies against certain liabilities to be “completely terminated” otherwise he would nix this year’s NDAA.

Trump claimed Section 230 posed a serious security threat for the United States. This is not the first time Trump has targeted the military budget. Earlier this year, Trump said he would veto the bill if US military bases named after Confederate generals were to be changed.

The United States Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General (IG) made a report highlighting a list of challenges faced by the U.S. military in 2021. "Maintaining the U.S. military's advantage while balancing great power competition and countering global terrorism requires the DoD to focus on enhancing interagency collaboration and rebuilding military capabilities that may have atrophied the past 20 years," the IG report states.

"The challenge for the DoD is to rebuild capabilities to effectively compete with near-peer rivals and other adversaries, while continuing to combat terrorists and insurgents," it further claimed, voicing concerns that the ongoing terrorist threat would be downplayed if DoD commits most of its attention on containing China and Russia.

Earlier this year, the notion of a new and emerging "Cold War" was brought up at the UN General Assembly by U.S. President Donald Trump who used the occasion to fire a barrage of allegations against the Chinese, ranging from the origins of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, to its ever emerging, and stronger economy

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