

Simple remarks on some arms control treaties, and “where might we go from here?”

Greg Mello, for the Utah Campaign to Abolish Nuclearism (UCAN), February 17, 2025

With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original physical appearance... This beginning is not the same as the beginning of the world; it is not the beginning of something but of somebody, who is a beginner himself. It is in the nature of beginning that something new is started which cannot be expected from whatever may have happened before. This character of startling unexpectedness is inherent in all beginnings and in all origins... The new always happens against the overwhelming odds of statistical laws and their probability, which for all practical, everyday purposes amounts to certainty; the new therefore always appears in the guise of a miracle. (Hannah Arendt)



Los Alamos Study Group, 2901 Summit Place NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106
www.lasg.org, 505-265-1200



To subscribe to the Study Group's main listserve send a blank email to lasg-subscribe@lists.riseup.net

To subscribe to the Study Group's New Mexico listserve, send a blank email to lasg_activist_leaders-subscribe@lists.riseup.net

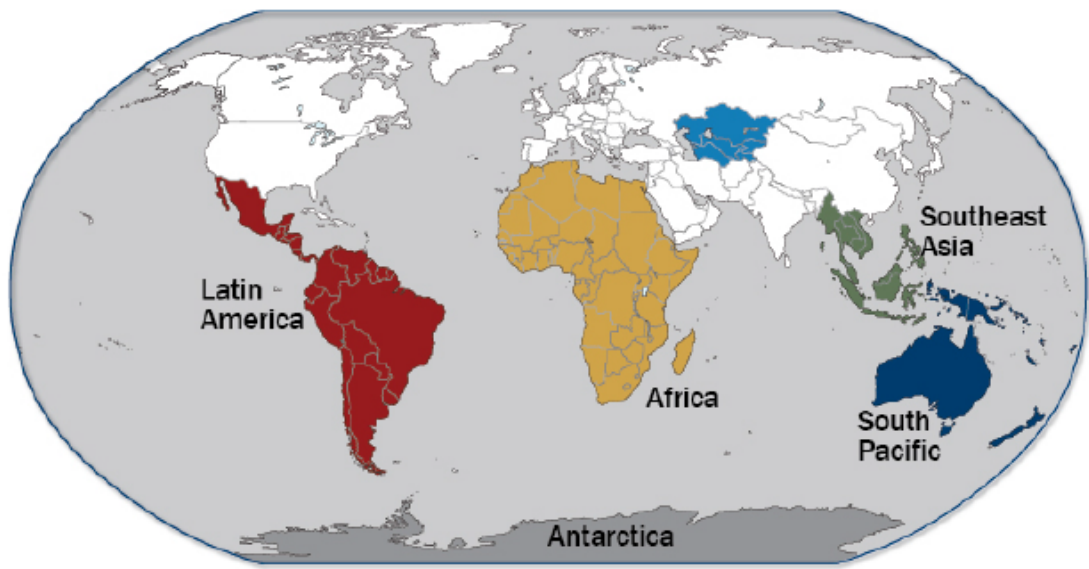
Blog: <https://lasg.org/wordpress/>

Most of the treaties concerning nuclear weapons, from the [Atomic Archive](#) and U.S. DoD, [Nuclear Matters](#), 2020 (revised), [Chapter 12](#).

- [1959 Antarctic Treaty](#)
- [1963 Hot Line Agreement](#)
- [1963 Limited Test Ban Treaty \(LTBT\)](#)
- [1967 Outer Space Treaty](#)
- [1967 Latin America Nuclear Free Zone \(NWFZ\) Treaty \(Treaty of Tlatelolco\)](#)
- [1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty \(NPT\)](#)
- [1971 Seabed Treaty](#)
- [1972 Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty I \(Interim Agreement\) \(SALT\)](#)
- [1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile \(ABM\) Treaty](#)
- [1974 Threshold Test Ban Treaty \(TTBT\)](#)
- [1974 Vladivostok Agreement](#)
- [1976 Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty \(PNET\)](#)
- [1977 Environmental Modification Convention](#)
- [1979 Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty II \(SALT II\)](#)
- [1985 South Pacific NWFZ Treaty \(Treaty of Raratonga\)](#)
- [1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces \(INF\) Treaty](#)
- [1988 Ballistic Missile Launch Notification Agreement](#)
- [1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty \(START I\)](#)
- [1992 Lisbon Protocol](#)
- [1993 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty II \(START II\)](#)
- [1995 Southeast Asia NWFZ Treaty \(Treaty of Bangkok\)](#)
- [1996 African NWFZ Treaty \(Treaty of Pelindaba\)](#)
- [1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty \(CTBT\)](#)
- [2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty \(SORT\)](#)
- [2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism](#)
- [2006 Central Asian NWFZ Treaty](#)
- [2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty \(New START\)](#)
- [2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons \(TPNW\)](#)

Expiry of New START: Feb. 4, 2026.

Coming? “Treaty on mutual security in Europe” (made-up name) and what could follow



Africa Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Central Asia Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

Latin America (Mexico, Central America, South America) Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela

Southeast Asia Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam

South Pacific Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu

For more on NWFZs please see the individual treaties, because they are different, and especially the important paper, [“Closing the gaps in the nuclear non-proliferation regime: The role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in achieving nuclear disarmament.”](#) Michael Spies, UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, 30 July 2014.

- Could the Global South either –**
- 1. Strengthen, expand, or extend these treaties; or**
 - 2. Bring some of their best features into the TPNW?**

Special problem: extended deterrence

Graphic from *Nuclear Matters*, 2020 ed.

Zeroing in on 3 key treaties (one of which does not yet exist)

- **NPT**

- **Ratified by U.S.; a domestic law. Ratified by most states, all of whom must work on disarmament. Israel, India, Pakistan, DPRK not parties.**
- **Noncompliance with all requirements in Article VI is increasing.**

Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

- **Article I and II violations (transfer, receive NWs) are increasing.**
- **At a minimum, creates a nonproliferation and disarmament norm and quasi-contractual disarmament relationship between states.**

- **TPNW**

- **U.S. and its rivals have not signed and will never sign the TPNW.**
- **Does not make nuclear weapons illegal for any state except those which sign and ratify. Does not create a customary-law expectation or requirement for disarmament.**
- **Could undermine extended deterrence, conceivably.**
- **Does have features which could trouble nuclear weapon states, and these could be magnified in meetings if political will was present.**
- **Currently functions more as an adjunct nonproliferation treaty and forum.**
- **Opinions differ as to whether the TPNW plays a positive or a negative role in U.S. nuclear resistance. We think it plays a strongly negative role.**

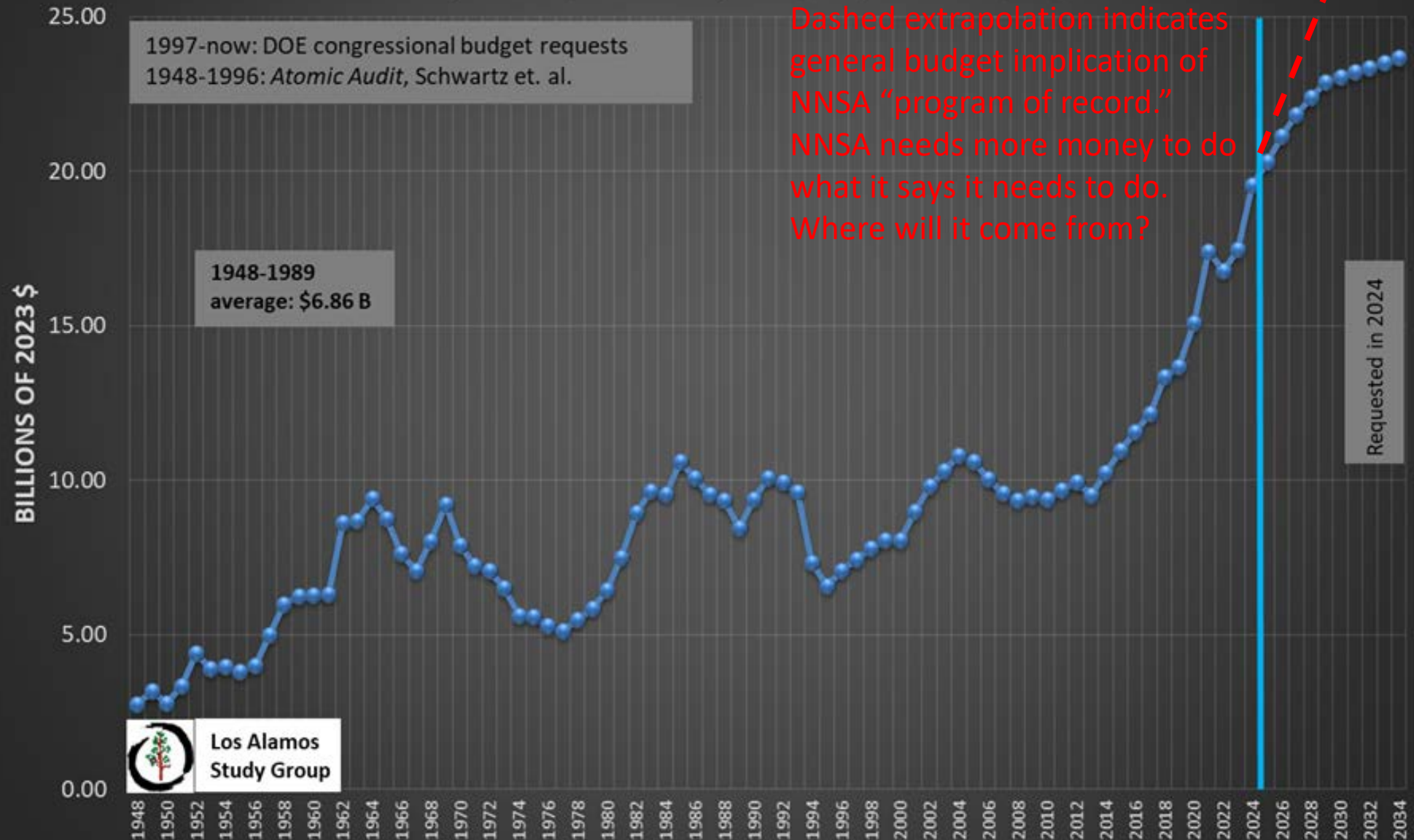
“Treaty on mutual security in Europe” (a made-up name)

- **Old-style arms control is dead and will not return. Trust in the U.S. is required, and the U.S. has demonstrated its utter untrustworthiness.**
- **This Treaty will end the Ukraine War and will take steps toward a new security architecture in Europe *and* Asia – or it will fail.**
- **It may entail a restructuring, over time, of NATO, of extended deterrence, and of European relationships with the U.S. and (definitely) with Russia.**
- **Will have both sudden and gradual characteristics – will remain a work-in-progress for some time. Will lead to, and follow from, changes in EU leadership.**
- **Requires changes in U.S. attitudes and may lead to major U.S. political changes. *Very worthy of political investment now and in the future.***

Where might we go from here?

1. **“DOGE & Co.” (including some of the new leadership in Congress)**
 - a. **Research, writing**
 - b. **Communications with key actors, specifically Mike Lee and John Curtis**
2. **Sentinel campaigns (missile, civil works, W87-1 and its LANL pits)**
 - a. **See <https://lasg.org/Modernization/Modernization.html>**
 - b. **Sites: Promontory (Northrup Grumman); Hill AFB, including Utah Test and Training Range (UTTR)**
 - c. **Liase with like-minded groups in ICBM states including CA (Vandenberg, Livermore) and NM (two labs).**
 - d. **Look mostly to the political right (MAGA)**
 - e. **Newspaper op-ed, LTE campaigns?**
 - f. **Billboards on interstates esp. I-80?**
3. **Visit, participate in, our proposed National Center for Disarmament Education?**
4. **Throughout, build strength of UCAN (obviously)**
5. **Ukraine peace/mutual security treaty: learn, communicate, demonstrate support**

AEC/ERDA/DOE/NNSA Annual Spending for Nuclear Weapons Research, Development, Testing, and Production: NNSA Weapons Activities with administrative costs included; constant 2023\$; ≥FY25 requested, in then-year \$. Updated 3/11/24.



Los Alamos National Laboratory Costs Incurred by Fiscal Year, billions 2023 dollars

Los Alamos Study Group, March 19, 2024

For FY2024, the amount shown is the annualized continuing resolution, not the final appropriation. For FY2025, the requested amount is shown. After 2002, "Strategic Partnerships" with other agencies, formerly called "Work for Others," are NOT included in LANL costs. Available WFO/SP data are shown in the red bars, also in constant 2023 \$. LANL gives its FY2024 budget, including SPs, as \$5.2 billion.

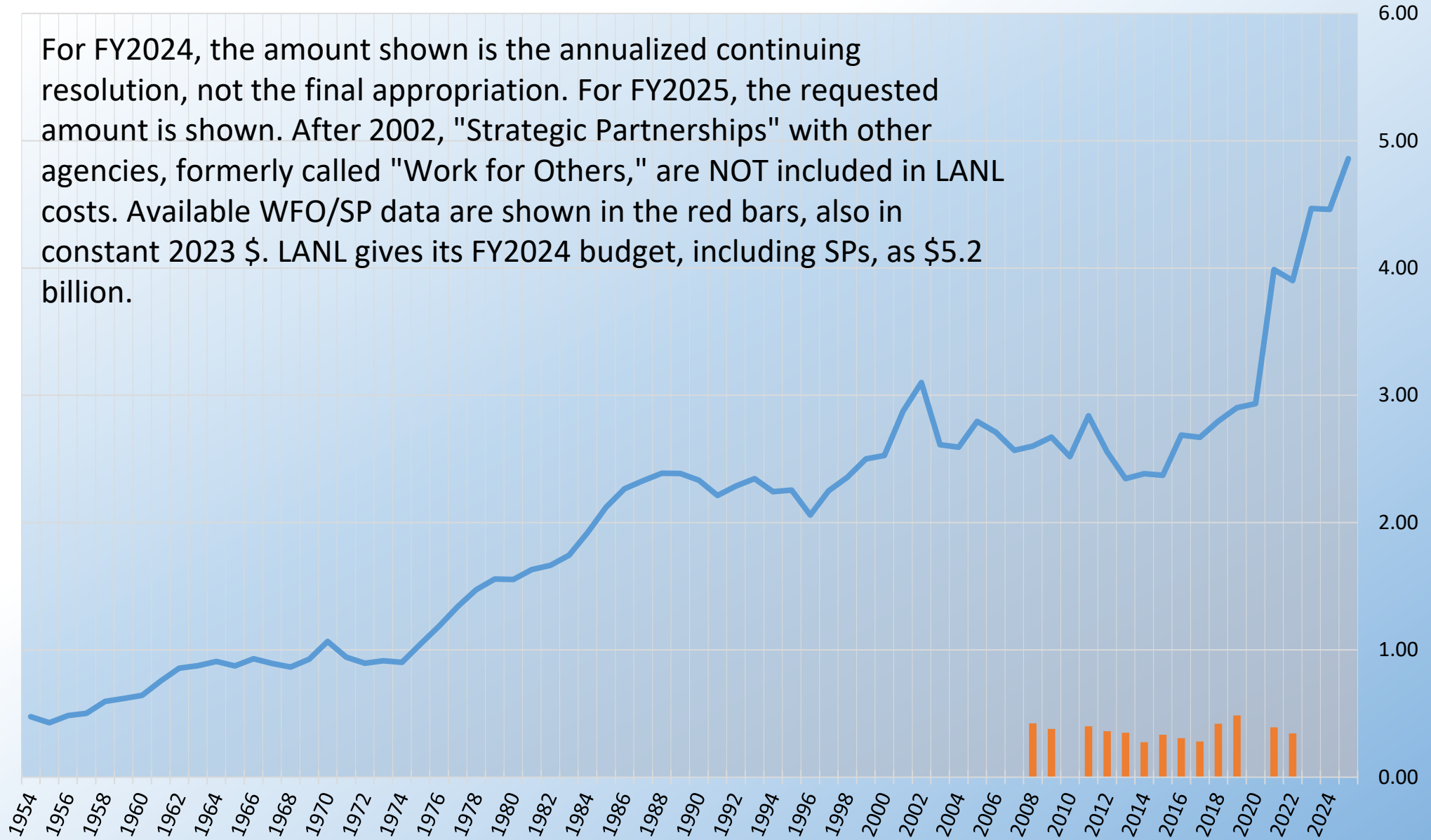


Table E-1. The nuclear security industrial base risk factors

Human Capital Gaps	Industry is unable to hire or retain U.S. workers with the necessary skill sets
Sole Source Vendors	Only one supplier is qualified to provide the required capability and/ or product
Constrained Market	Capacity is unavailable in required quantities or time due to competing market demands
Product Security	Lack of cyber and physical protection results in eroding integrity and confidence
Sunset Technologies	Product or material obsolescence resulting from decline in relevant suppliers
Foreign Dependency	Domestic industry does not produce the product, or does not produce in sufficient quantities
Eroding Infrastructure	Loss of specialized capital equipment needed to integrate, manufacture, or maintain capability
Regulatory Changes	Labor, environmental, transportation, etc., laws outpace industry's ability to develop alternative processes
Inflation	Changes to the global market causing uncertainty in suppliers pricing models thereby increase costs in material, labor, and freight over a short period of time
Global Events	Both manmade and natural events such as the war in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic that negatively impact the supplies of critical goods and services

COVID-19 = Coronavirus Disease 2019

(From a previous talk)

The other big (set of) issue(s) on the table has to do with us – with the nature and direction of our collective engagement, including our resistance to nuclear-military colonization, U.S. wars, and the nuclear arms race.

- How can we discern, and disengage from, efforts to normalize pit production at LANL and our nuclear colonial status?
- How can we make resistance to nuclear weapons expansion in New Mexico effective?
- What shapes might it take?
- How can it be integrated into efforts to build a more humane, resilient society?
- How can it enhance our relationships, careers, and lives?
- How can we build community while successfully opposing nuclear weapons?

Thank you for your attention. We hope you will work with us. Every one of us can make a unique and important contribution.

(From a previous talk)

Some hallmarks of solutions which are not false

- Local ownership and control, with all the challenges, responsibilities and uncertainties attendant on that
- Small scale
- Inclusive respect for all beings, especially the young and the old, including the non-human, including communities.
- Independence and personal freedom, non-cooptation and non-subservience, in balance with responsibility.
- Simplicity, frugality, efficiency, conservation (“Simple living”)
- Continual search for truth of all kinds and reliable, liberating knowledge (“High thinking”)
- Foster a wide range of skills, undercutting the control of monopolies and bureaucracies (“High skilling”)
- Build community resilience to social, natural, and economic hazards
- Be reality-based
- Involve thorough nonviolence
- Are conservative of traditions, building on them, including spiritual traditions. Deepen, don’t dispose.
- Stability and solidity as to place, land, people, and memory. Don’t “melt into air.”
- Creative, artistic, expressing and fostering the *elan vital* that consumerism has smothered. Accept grief, embrace joy.