

The Bush administration is pushing through a broad array of foreign weapons deals as it seeks to rearm Iraq and Afghanistan, contain North Korea and Iran, and solidify ties with onetime Russian allies.

From tanks, helicopters and fighter jets to missiles, remotely piloted aircraft and even warships, the Department of Defense has agreed so far this fiscal year to sell or transfer more than \$32 billion in weapons and other military equipment to foreign governments, compared with \$12 billion in 2005.

The trend, which started in 2006, is most pronounced in the Middle East, but it reaches into northern Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and even Canada, through dozens of deals that senior Bush administration officials say they are confident will both tighten military alliances and combat terrorism.

“This is not about being gunrunners,” said Bruce S. Lemkin, the Air Force deputy under secretary who is helping to coordinate many of the biggest sales. “This is about building a more secure world.”

The surging American arms sales reflect the foreign policy tides, including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the broader campaign against international terrorism, that have dominated the Bush administration. Deliveries on orders now being placed will continue for several years, perhaps as one of President Bush’s most lasting legacies.

The United States is far from the only country pushing sophisticated weapons systems: it is facing intense competition from Russia and elsewhere in Europe, including continuing contests for multibillion-dollar deals to sell fighter jets to India and Brazil.

In that booming market, American military contractors are working closely with the Pentagon, which acts as a broker and procures arms for foreign customers through its Foreign Military Sales program.

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