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Articles & Other Documents:

[New Team Plans To Identify Nuclear Attackers](#)

[Countering The Iranian Nuclear Threat](#)

[Anti-U.S. Terror Threat Still Potent, Negroponte Warns](#)

[In Another Threat, Iran Warns It May Block Inspections](#)

[Nukes Pursued In Multiple Ways](#)

[World Nuclear Panel Meets Today To Consider Motion To Take Iran To Security Council](#)

[Rumsfeld: Terrorism Threat May Be Greater](#)

[Nuclear Weapons: NNSA Needs to Refine and More Effectively Manage Its New Approach for Assessing and Certifying Nuclear Weapons \(GAO Report\)](#)

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New York Times
February 2, 2006

New Team Plans To Identify Nuclear Attackers

By William J. Broad

The Pentagon has formed a team of nuclear experts to analyze the fallout from a terrorist nuclear attack on American soil in an effort to identify the attackers, officials have said.

The team, which can draw on hundreds of federal experts, uses such tools as robots that gather radioactive debris and sensitive gear to detect the origins of a device, whether a true atomic weapon or a so-called dirty bomb, that uses ordinary explosives to spew radioactivity.

The objective is to determine quickly who exploded the device and where it came from, in part to clarify the options to strike back, the officials said. The government also hopes that terrorists will be less likely to use a nuclear device if they know that it can be traced.

Michael K. Evenson, associate director for operations at the Pentagon's Defense Threat Reduction Agency, which directs the team, said the program began operating last year. In federal parlance, the team conducts domestic nuclear event attribution, informally post-event forensics.

"I'm very confident we can achieve what we set out to do," Mr. Evenson said in an interview. "We've started, and intend to continue, an exercise and evaluation program so this doesn't fall into atrophy."

Today, Mr. Evenson is to speak about the detective work at a conference in Arlington, Va., sponsored by the Institute for Defense and Government Advancement, a company that runs military meetings. Officials said the talk would be the first time a federal official has publicly spoken about the program.

News reports have described scientific research conducted by the Pentagon and other federal agencies on discovering the origins of nuclear materials and devices. But the fact that the government is able to field organized teams to respond to an attack has not been reported.

Mr. Evenson said a secret presidential directive, "National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction," signed in September 2002, called for forming the team and its supporting network, which includes the Defense Department and other agencies.

The goal, he said, was "to figure out who attacked us" by analyzing the origins of nuclear materials and the origins and design of the devices.

Many experts say the risk of a terrorist nuclear attack is low but no longer unthinkable, given the spread of atomic materials and know-how.

A senior military official, who insisted on anonymity because he was not authorized to disclose details of the program, said the threat reduction agency successfully conducted an exercise in October involving hundreds of people from many agencies. The participants, he said, included field workers gathering radioactive samples, nuclear analysts in laboratories working on the data and intelligence experts.

"It was a blind test," the official said. "None of the participants knew what they were analyzing."

The White House was briefed on the success in identifying the origins of the material, he added.

The official said that the site from which the team would send personnel and robots to gather radioactive samples was classified.

A document on the atomic sleuthing effort obtained by The New York Times said that the team had achieved an "initial integrated operational attribution capability for accurate and rapid attribution."

The document also said that the threat reduction agency had developed and exercised "robot technologies to collect debris samples in high radiation fields."

In the cold war, learning a nuclear attacker's identity was seen as simply a matter of tracking a missile from its blastoff point. But the threat of domestic terrorism using unconventional arms has changed that, adding the potential for anonymity.

Part of the new effort deals with reviving a science lost after the cold war — radioactive fallout analysis. Faint clues, often invisible to the eye, can, under intense scientific scrutiny, help identify an exploded bomb's type and characteristics,

Federal experts say that positively identifying the origin may require matching signatures from the debris with libraries of classified data about nuclear arms from around the world, including old fallout records and more direct intelligence about bomb types, characteristics and construction materials.

This detective work has many potential complexities, including the fact that knowing who made a bomb may say little about who detonated it. In Tom Clancy's "Sum of All Fears" (1991), Islamic terrorists find, rebuild and detonate an Israeli nuclear weapon.

Federal experts say that with the complex variety of possible threats — for instance, an American warhead being stolen and detonated in an American city — many types of intelligence may be needed. Although the threat reduction agency leads the effort, the program draws on experts at other agencies like the Homeland Security Department, the Justice Department, the Energy Department and eight national laboratories, officials said.

If an attack occurred overseas, the field elements of a team could rush there to gather radioactive and other samples for analysis at home, the senior military official said.

"That's clearly what it's designed to do," he said of the team.

Experts agree that such detective work can prove difficult. For years, the International Atomic Energy Agency has struggled with limited success to identify the source of highly enriched uranium, a potential bomb fuel, found by the agency's inspectors on Iranian nuclear gear.

Military officials said that the identification program was making great strides in detection and that they expected new advances.

"Our capabilities are much improved," the senior military official said. "We've trained a new generation, and they'll push the science and the operations into the future."

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/02/politics/02nuke.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all&oref=slogin

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

(Editor's Note: Transcript of Secretary Joseph's remarks follows article.)

Nukes Pursued In Multiple Ways

By Bill Gertz, The Washington Times

Iran is building nuclear weapons through both plutonium and enriched uranium as part of a secret development effort, a senior State Department official said yesterday.

"The regime in Tehran is actively pursuing a nuclear weapons capability," Robert G. Joseph, the undersecretary of state for arms control, said in a speech.

Mr. Joseph said in remarks prepared for delivery to a conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee that Iran is pursuing "numerous routes to provide it with the ability to produce fissile material for weapons."

The comments were a rare public disclosure by the Bush administration about Iran's secret nuclear arms program.

"We judge Iran is going down the plutonium route through construction of a heavy-water research reactor and a heavy-water plant," he said, noting that Tehran has carried out experimental plutonium separation and purification work.

"Iran has even more aggressively pursued the enrichment route, demonstrating its commitment and determination to expend tremendous resources in defiance of the international community by building facilities to convert and enrich uranium."

Mr. Joseph said an Iranian facility at Natanz has thousands of centrifuges to enrich uranium and that recently discovered documents show Iran has technology for casting and machining hemispheres of enriched uranium. "We know of no application for such hemispheres other than nuclear weapons," he said.

Iran also has missiles, such as the 800-mile-range Shahab-3, and is working on longer-range missiles that could deliver nuclear warheads, he said.

"We believe it aspires to this capability so that it can hold hostage the cities of our friends in the Middle East and Europe -- and perhaps in the future even those in our own country," Mr. Joseph said.

"If Tehran can succeed in this effort, it may believe that it could undertake its expansionist designs with less concern that we would be willing to accept the risk of assisting our allies in the Gulf."

The Bush administration will not accept a nuclear armed Iran because of the threat it poses to the region, Tehran's backing for terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, and the direct threat it will pose to U.S. forces and allies in the region and Europe and Asia, Mr. Joseph said.

Also, Iran's nuclear arms could be a "fuse" for further arms proliferation and they represent a threat to Israel, he said.

"Not content with his efforts to destroy the peace process, [Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad may believe that nuclear weapons are the chosen instrument to achieve his stated goal of wiping Israel off the map," he said.

"Despite the resulting apocalyptic costs for Iran itself, the regime could miscalculate, or accept those costs in the cause of martyrdom."

In Tehran yesterday, Mr. Ahmadinejad lashed out at the United States and vowed to resist the pressure of "bully countries" as European nations circulated a draft resolution urging that Tehran be reported to the U.N. Security Council for its nuclear activities.

Mr. Joseph warned that Iran is "at the nexus" of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. "If Iran has fissile material or nuclear weapons, the likelihood of their transfer to a third party would increase -- by design or through diversion," he said.

As for the threat of military action, Mr. Joseph said: "The president has repeatedly emphasized that all options are on the table to deal with the threat from Iran, but that our strong preference is to do so through effective diplomacy."

<http://www.washtimes.com/world/20060202-120246-6743r.htm>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

U.S. Department of State

Countering The Iranian Nuclear Threat

Robert G. Joseph, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security

Remarks at the Annual Dinner of the Greater Washington Area Council for the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee

Washington, DC

February 1, 2006

Remarks as Prepared

Late last year, the British Museum sponsored a major exhibit entitled "The Forgotten Empire: The World of Ancient Persia." The exhibition underscored the greatness of the Persian nation founded over 2500 years ago. Greatness not just in military might, but in wealth, architecture and engineering, and also in art, culture and civilization.

One of the most striking items in the exhibit was the Cyrus Cylinder, a stone cylinder covered with cuneiform writing, which describes Cyrus the Great's conquest of Babylon and his edict that all religious sects be tolerated and all deported peoples freed. As many in this room know better than I, Cyrus' edict set in motion the process that led to the end of the Babylonian Captivity and to the return of the Jews to Israel.

The Persian Empire disappeared over 2000 years ago, but the civilization and pride of the Iranian people have remained. The Iranian nation has the potential for a future as great as its past. It has a tremendous resource in its young and dynamic population. It has a large and capable scientific and technical community. And, of course, it has immense oil and gas reserves, which should be more efficiently used for the benefit of the Iranian people.

Tragically, Iran's leadership today fails to reflect and to foster the potential of the Iranian nation. Instead, it is backward-looking, defying the values that made Persia great. It strives to create a much different legacy — a legacy of intolerance and threat.

The current regime in Teheran is the world's most active state sponsor of terrorism, closely tied to the most notorious terrorist groups in the Middle East, actively encouraging those dedicated to the violent disruption of peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Iran provides weapons, funding and guidance to Hezbollah, and significant support to Hamas and the Palestine Islamic Jihad.

The regime in Teheran also deprives its people of fundamental human rights, and its abysmal record is worsening. It uses its control of the security forces, the judiciary, and other levers of power to thwart and suppress criticism and reform.

The regime seeks great power status — but in a form unrecognizable from Persia's past glories. It seeks hegemony in the region and in the Islamic world based on fanaticism. In doing so, it is working to foment discontent among Shi'a in Iraq, seeking to thwart the ability of the Iraqi people to enjoy the fruits of their liberation from Saddam Hussein. It is working to support the repressive leaders in Damascus who are stifling the aspirations of the people of Lebanon to determine their own destiny to establish a future of peace and prosperity.

And, as you all are aware, the Ahmadi-Nejad regime ranks first in its hatred of Israel. When the Iranian President makes a major speech calling for Israel "to be wiped from the face of the earth," he might be saying exactly what he means. Not only has he repeatedly defended this statement — and called for the United States to be treated in a similar fashion — but he has gone further — questioning the historical reality of the Holocaust.

And, of course, the regime in Teheran is actively pursuing a nuclear weapons capability. Let me be clear about this. For almost 20 years, Iran systematically violated its IAEA safeguards and NPT obligations by hiding its nuclear fuel cycle efforts and conducting a covert program aimed at nuclear weapons. Teheran has admitted some of those efforts -- but only after clandestine work had been publicly exposed, first by an Iranian opposition group, and subsequently through the investigations of the International Atomic Energy Agency. But these admissions fall far short of acknowledging the true purpose of its nuclear program. Iran continues to insist that the goal of the program is peaceful; and that every step it takes that brings it closer to a nuclear weapons capability is only done in furtherance of its legal right to develop civil nuclear energy.

In fact, Iran has pursued numerous routes to provide it with the ability to produce fissile material for weapons. We judge Iran is going down the plutonium route through construction of a heavy water research reactor and a heavy water plant. It has conducted experiments to separate and purify plutonium. Iran has even more aggressively pursued the enrichment route, demonstrating its commitment and determination to expend tremendous resources in defiance of the international community by building facilities to convert and enrich uranium.

All of these efforts have involved a dizzying array of cover stories and false statements over many years. And now Teheran has declared that it will actually resume feeding UF₆ into what it says will be a few centrifuges. The cover story this time is that this is merely innocent "research and development" — one Iranian official reportedly said this was the type of research that is conducted at many universities. Not at my university or any other that I know.

The removal of IAEA seals three weeks ago, including at the large facility at Natanz — which Iran has said is intended to house tens of thousands of centrifuges to enrich uranium -- is the next logical and necessary step to proceed to enrichment on an industrial scale. Consistent with our assessment, the IAEA recently discovered documents that indicate that Iran received information on casting and machining hemispheres of enriched uranium. We know of no application for such hemispheres other than nuclear weapons.

Iran is also pursuing the delivery systems that would allow it to threaten nuclear strikes against its neighbors in the region and well beyond. It is producing and deploying increasing numbers of the Shahab-3, a 1300-km range ballistic missile, and has publicly acknowledged work on even longer-range systems. We believe it aspires to this capability so that it can hold hostage cities of our friends in the Middle East and Europe — and perhaps in the future

even those in our own country. If Teheran can succeed in this effort, it may believe that it could undertake its expansionist designs with less concern that we would be willing to accept the risk of assisting our allies in the Gulf. The President has made clear that a nuclear-armed Iran is unacceptable. Let me be explicit why we cannot accept a nuclear-armed Iran:

" A nuclear-armed Iran could embolden the leadership in Teheran to advance its aggressive ambitions in and outside of the region, both directly and through the terrorists it supports — ambitions that gravely threaten stability and the security of U.S. friends and allies.

" A nuclear-armed Iran would represent a direct threat to U.S. forces and allies in the region, the greater Middle East, Europe and Asia, and eventually to the United States itself. The likelihood of Iranian use of force, including possibly chemical and biological weapons, could increase if Teheran believed its nuclear capability protected it from retaliation. At a minimum, it could seek to use nuclear weapons as a powerful tool of intimidation and blackmail.

" A nuclear-armed Iran could provide the fuse for further proliferation, engendering a re-evaluation of security requirements across the region, and undermining the nuclear nonproliferation regime. " A nuclear-armed Iran would represent an existential threat to the state of Israel. Not content with his efforts to destroy the peace process, Ahmadi-Nejad may believe that nuclear weapons are the chosen instrument to achieve his stated goal of wiping Israel "off the map." Despite the resulting apocalyptic costs for Iran itself, the regime could miscalculate, or accept those costs in the cause of martyrdom.

" And finally, Iran is at the nexus of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, pursuing nuclear, chemical and biological programs and actively supporting terrorist movements. If Iran has fissile material or nuclear weapons, the likelihood of their transfer to a third party would increase — by design or through diversion. Now I will turn to our approach for dealing with Iran's nuclear challenge."

From the earliest days after his inauguration, President Bush has given the highest priority to combating WMD and missile proliferation, and has adopted new measures to counter this challenge.

The Administration began by fashioning the first truly national, comprehensive strategy for preventing and protecting against the threat. Within this strategy, the Administration readily acknowledged that the starting point, and initial line of defense, is to prevent proliferation. However, we also knew that prevention would not always succeed. Therefore, we have placed new emphasis on protection from, and response to, the use of these weapons against us or our friends and allies. We are building the counterproliferation capabilities to deter, defend against, and defeat weapons of mass destruction in the hands of our enemies. And we are acquiring the ability to contain and reduce the potentially horrific effects if these weapons are used against us.

We must bring all elements of our strategy to bear in our targeted effort against the Iranian WMD and missile threat. I would like to highlight two areas in particular: the critical set of tools against proliferation that we call "defensive measures," and determined diplomacy to end Iran's nuclear weapons program and prevent further nuclear proliferation.

As with diplomacy, to be successful in our defensive measures, we must work with others who share our goals. Taking defensive measures to protect ourselves from WMD proliferation and WMD-armed adversaries requires a broad array of instruments, policies, and programs.

At one end of the spectrum are those measures that prevent Iran and other proliferators from gaining access to sensitive technologies and materials that could represent a short cut to nuclear weapons. Nunn-Lugar and other nonproliferation programs are key in this effort, reinforcing other important measures such as effective export controls by all states. As an Administration, we have succeeded in expanding and accelerating these programs through not only U.S. funding, but also through the President's Global Partnership initiative which has added billions of dollars from others.

At the other end of the spectrum, one element of the solution set is missile defense, as well as improved counterforce and passive defense capabilities. In a number of these critical areas, we are working closely with our allies, such as with Japan and Israel, on missile defenses to protect both our forces and our populations. This capability adds not only another layer of defense to our strategic posture against the threat we face, but also another reason to persuade states like Iran not to acquire nuclear weapons in the first place.

Other defensive measures address the financial underpinnings of proliferation. UN Security Council Resolution 1540 — adopted at the President's urging — requires states to adopt and enforce effective controls on funds and services related to export and transshipment that would contribute to WMD programs. Consistent with Resolution 1540, G-8 Leaders have called for enhanced efforts to combat proliferation through cooperation to identify, track and freeze transactions and assets associated with proliferation activities.

President Bush augmented U.S. efforts in this field when he issued last June a new Executive Order, which authorizes the U.S. Government to freeze assets and block transactions of entities and persons, or their supporters, engaged in proliferation activities, and to prohibit U.S. persons from engaging in transactions with them. Currently

18 entities — 6 from Iran, as well as 11 from North Korea and one from Syria — have been designated under the Order, and we are actively considering designating additional ones.

Finally, one of the most important defensive measures undertaken by the Bush Administration is the Proliferation Security Initiative, which shows the close interaction among — and the creative use of — diplomatic, military, economic, law enforcement, and intelligence tools to combat proliferation. PSI countries have put all of these assets to work in a multinational, yet flexible, fashion. The participating countries are applying laws already on the books in innovative ways and cooperating as never before to interdict shipments, to disrupt proliferation networks, and to hold accountable the front companies that support them. PSI has now expanded to include support from more than 70 countries, and continues to grow. It is not a treaty-based approach, involving long, ponderous negotiations that yield results only slowly, if at all. Instead, it is an active -- and proactive -- partnership, to deter, disrupt and prevent proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery.

And PSI is working — including against Iran. PSI cooperation has stopped the transshipment of material and equipment bound for Iran's ballistic missile programs. PSI partners, working at times with others, have also prevented Iran from procuring goods to support its WMD programs, including its nuclear program. And, of course, it was PSI cooperation among the U.S., UK, and other European partners that began the demise of the A.Q. Khan network, an action that also contributed to the decision of the Libyan government to abandon its nuclear weapons and longer-range missile programs. Additional diplomatic initiatives address other elements of the problem. One clear lesson from the Iran case is that some states will cynically manipulate the provisions of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to acquire the sensitive technologies to enable them to pursue nuclear weapons — the very capability the Treaty is intended to deny. To foreclose that proliferation avenue, President Bush has challenged the international community to correct the greatest weakness in the nuclear nonproliferation system: the ability of states like Iran to seek nuclear weapons under the cover of peaceful energy programs.

To achieve this end, we are working with major supplier states, with the IAEA and with industry to provide assurances that states will have reliable access to nuclear fuel and that their best interest is not to invest in their own fuel-cycle capabilities. If we can succeed, this will be a major gain for proliferation security — and help prevent future Irans.

As we work with partners to close the loophole in the NPT that Iran has sought to exploit, we are also pursuing active diplomacy to prevent Iran from succeeding. Last September, following Iran's resumption of uranium conversion, the IAEA Board found Iran in formal noncompliance with its safeguards obligations — a finding which requires a report to the Security Council under the IAEA statute — and also found that Iran's nuclear activities raise questions concerning international peace and security that are within the competence of the UN Security Council. At the last IAEA Board meeting in November, we decided to support the request of the United Kingdom, France and Germany — the so-called EU-3 — to defer again, for a short period, the report to the Security Council of Iranian noncompliance. While we believed that we had a majority of the votes, we thought it best to seek an even broader international grouping to pressure Iran to return to the negotiations on the basis of the original terms. We also welcomed Russia's efforts to get Iran to return to negotiations.

In response, Iran rejected negotiation and instead chose confrontation, repeatedly and deliberately. Iran has now defied the international community by deciding to remove international seals and resume uranium enrichment activities. In so doing, it has shattered the basis for continued negotiations with the EU-3. Its empty calls for negotiations after it destroyed the framework for negotiations, and its on-again/off-again professions of possible interest in the Russian proposal for enrichment on Russian territory, are transparent efforts at stalling — continuing its practice of smoke and salami slicing that we have watched for three years.

The EU-3 have made very clear that Teheran's actions, unless reversed, have brought their negotiating process to a dead end. The clear majority of states know that the European effort, which had U.S. support, went the extra mile — and then some — to achieve an outcome of substantial benefit to Iran, but without including Iranian access to enrichment or reprocessing technologies. This phase of the process is now over. We still believe the issue can be resolved diplomatically. But to achieve this, we must stand together and press Iran to make the strategic decision to end its nuclear weapons program.

There is no reasonable peaceful explanation for the Iranian regime to resume uranium enrichment. The way ahead is shaped by Iran's long history of hiding sensitive nuclear activities from the IAEA in violation of its obligations, its refusal to cooperate fully with the IAEA's investigation, its rejection of diplomatic initiatives offered by the EU and Russia, and now its dangerous defiance of the entire international community.

The President and Secretary Rice have emphasized that the time is now for the IAEA Board to report Iran to the Security Council and that this step does not signal the end of diplomacy, but its next phase. The Iranian regime's resumption of enrichment activity left no choice but to call an emergency meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors to report Iran's noncompliance with its safeguards obligations to the UN Security Council.

The five permanent members of the Security Council as well as Germany agreed in London very early Tuesday morning that the IAEA Board should report Iran to the Security Council at its special session opening tomorrow. They also agreed that the Council will act on Iranian noncompliance after Director General ElBaradei's report to the March 6 meeting of the IAEA Board.

The Security Council will not supplant the IAEA effort, but reinforce it — for example, by calling on Iran to cooperate with the Agency and to take steps the IAEA Board has identified to restore confidence, and by giving the IAEA new, needed authority to investigate all aspects of the Iranian nuclear effort. The Council should make clear to the Iranian regime that there will be consequences if it does not step away from its nuclear weapons ambitions. The United States will encourage the Security Council to achieve this end. We will continue to consult closely with the EU-3 and the EU, with Russia, China and many other members of the international community in the coming days and weeks, as this new diplomatic phase proceeds.

We have no illusion that reporting the Iran issue to the Security Council will produce a quick resolution of the threat that Iran presents, including its determined pursuit of nuclear weapons. When faced with a challenge like that which we face from Iran — a country that is able to bring to bear many of its own tools — diplomacy will never be easy, nor will its results be immediate. But there is no panacea; there is no easy option.

Because we are realistic, the United States and our partners are pursuing multiple avenues to prevent the emergence of a nuclear-armed Iran. Defensive measures are essential and should be expanded. The President has repeatedly emphasized that all options are on the table to deal with the threat from Iran, but that our strong preference is to do so through effective diplomacy. A peaceful diplomatic solution to this issue would spare the world from the threat posed by a nuclear-armed Iran and would benefit the Iranian people with the possibility of fuller integration with the international community.

Diplomacy remains essential and, despite the frustrations, is working. It has taken time — several years — to forge an international consensus on Iran. But this was necessary to convince others of the nature of the Iranian program and to provide a rationale for action. Few today doubt Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapons capability. A majority of the IAEA Board are now willing to vote to report Iran to the Security Council. And the Council offers the best next step for diplomacy to succeed.

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<http://www.state.gov/t/us/rm/60254.htm>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times

February 2, 2006

World Nuclear Panel Meets Today To Consider Motion To Take Iran To Security Council

By Elaine Sciolino

VIENNA, Feb. 1 — Britain, France and Germany introduced a draft resolution on Wednesday asking the 35-nation board of the International Atomic Energy Agency to refer Iran's nuclear case to the United Nations Security Council. The proposed resolution can be modified when it is discussed by the decision-making board in an emergency session here on Thursday.

In its current form, the resolution recalls Iran's "many failures and breaches of its obligations" under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and "the absence of confidence that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively for peaceful purposes resulting from the history of concealment of Iran's nuclear activities."

It asks the agency's director, Mohamed ElBaradei, to report to the Security Council "on the steps required from Iran" and asks the board to submit all agency reports and resolutions about the nature of Iran's nuclear activities to the Council.

But in an important concession to Russia and China, which initially resisted any Security Council involvement, the resolution delayed for another month any action in the Council concerning Iran.

The Russians also succeeded in making sure that the resolution did not include the word noncompliance, which they argued had important legal consequences that would automatically require Iran's case to be referred to the Security Council under the agency's statutes.

But a senior State Department official maintained that the question was academic. With or without the word, the proposed measure would require the nuclear agency to report to the Security Council all relevant resolutions and findings previously approved, which would include a resolution passed last fall holding Iran in noncompliance.

The leading powers closed ranks, seemingly in intentionally public fashion. President Bush spoke to President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia by telephone, thanking him for his offer to enrich uranium for Iran on Russian soil, and

the two leaders agreed that it was "important to stay in close contact" on the Iran nuclear issue, said the White House spokesman, Scott McLellan.

Russia's deputy foreign minister, Sergei I. Kislyak, said that "our friendly advice to our Iranian colleagues" is that they must cooperate.

In London, Jack Straw, the British foreign secretary, said he had told the Iranian foreign minister, Manouchehr Mottaki, that Iran should end its defiance. "He really needs to see this agreed position by the leaders of the international community not as a threat but as an opportunity for Iran to put itself back on track" for meeting obligations "which it entered in to," Mr. Straw said on BBC radio.

Sometimes the Europeans seem to be talking tougher than the Americans. In an interview published Wednesday in *Le Parisien*, for example, France's foreign minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy, said, "The complete range of sanctions is conceivable."

In Washington on Wednesday evening, one of the chief architects of the Bush administration's Iran strategy, Robert G. Joseph, the under secretary of state for arms control and international security, detailed the administration's case against Iran, charging that it was seeking to combine its nuclear ambitions with a fleet of missiles that "can hold hostage cities of our friends in the Middle East and Europe."

Mr. Joseph used a speech to the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee to focus attention on documents discovered by the nuclear agency's inspectors in Iran that show how to machine-cut enriched uranium into hemispheres, a shape suitable for detonation. Dismissing Iran's claim that the documents were not part of its nuclear program, Mr. Joseph said, "We know of no application for such hemispheres other than nuclear weapons."

He also described "why we cannot accept a nuclear-armed Iran," in terms that had echoes of the speeches administration officials gave three years ago when they were building a case against Saddam Hussein's Iraq. "A nuclear-armed Iran could embolden the leadership in Tehran to advance its aggressive ambitions in and outside the region, both directly and through the terrorists it supports," he said.

He said the country, once armed, "would represent a direct threat to U.S. forces and allies in the region," and "could provide the fuse for further proliferation." He also said that it "would represent an existential threat to the state of Israel."

"Finally, Iran is at the nexus of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism," he argued. "If Iran has fissile material or nuclear weapons, the likelihood of their transfer to a third party would increase."

Bush administration officials have said repeatedly that they want a go-slow approach, avoiding sanctions that might enrage the Iranian people, like banning Iran from playing in the World Cup soccer championships, for example.

The United States, Russia and China did not co-sponsor the resolution, although Gregory L. Schulte, the American ambassador to the nuclear agency, told reporters that the resolution "has the support" of the three big nuclear powers. A Russian diplomat said his country would reluctantly accept the draft resolution.

The three European countries sponsoring the resolution made an agreement with Iran in November 2004 that froze most of its nuclear activities. It was Iran's violation of that voluntary accord last month by reopening its uranium enrichment plant at Natanz that prompted the call for the emergency session here.

The United States and the Europeans expressed confidence that they would receive the majority vote needed to pass the resolution. Unlike the Security Council, the atomic energy agency allows no vetoes, and abstentions are not counted.

With a monthlong reprieve from Security Council action, the official Iranian position is that Tehran wants to keep talking with the Europeans and the Russians to resolve the mounting nuclear crisis.

But Iranian officials inside and outside the country have insisted that they have no intention of closing the Natanz plant again, as demanded by the agency, the five permanent members of the Security Council, Germany and other countries.

In what might be called megaphone diplomacy, Iranian officials in various capitals repeated the threat that any action involving the Security Council would force Iran to carry out a law suspending all "voluntary measures" with the agency.

That would bar the agency from conducting inspections on short notice and would block it from certain sites, like Iran's uranium mines and heavy water reactor program, Ali Asghar Soltaniyeh, Iran's ambassador to the agency, said here.

Mr. Soltaniyeh, whose experience in nuclear matters predates the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran, also confirmed that his country would resume its program to build 50,000 centrifuges eventually at Natanz and begin full-scale production of "tons" of enriched uranium there.

In Tehran, Ali Larijani, the chief Iranian nuclear negotiator, echoed Mr. Soltaniyeh's threats. "They should expect us to take reciprocal action," he said. "There is no winning for them this game."

Mr. Larijani emphasized that Iran would honor its commitments under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, but not those made outside the pact.

His most animated comments concerned reports that the nuclear agency's inspectors had identified a secretive Green Salt Project, which worked on uranium processing, high explosives and missile warhead design. The agency based its findings at least in part on a document that it said provided information on the design of a missile "re-entry vehicle."

"One point five is really the number of pages," he said, referring to the document. "If any of you could make a bomb out of one and a half pages, I will make gold out of you. Is this reasonable?"

Wednesday was the 27th anniversary of the return to Iran of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini after the fall of the country's monarchy and the triumph of his revolution, a day devoted to emotional speeches on the greatness of the Islamic Republic.

In a speech to thousands of people at the nuclear plant at Bushehr on the Persian Gulf, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad branded President Bush a criminal stained with "the blood of other nations" who should be put on trial.

Iran correctly proclaims its right under its treaty obligations to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes, and Mr. Ahmadinejad, addressing what he called "the fake superpowers," said, "The Iranian people will continue until they master nuclear energy, which is their right."

Reporting for this article was contributed by Sarah Lyall from London, Michael Slackman from Tehran, and David E. Sanger and Steven R. Weisman from Washington.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/02/international/middleeast/02iran.html?pagewanted=all>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Times

February 3, 2006

Pg. 1

Anti-U.S. Terror Threat Still Potent, Negroponte Warns

Al Qaeda likely to use explosives in next attack

By Bill Gertz, The Washington Times

Al Qaeda terrorism remains the most serious threat to U.S. national security, and the insurgency in Iraq shows no sign of abating, the nation's top intelligence official told the Senate yesterday.

Director of National Intelligence John D. Negroponte also said that Iran's nuclear development program is "an immediate concern," although Tehran probably does not yet have a nuclear device.

Mr. Negroponte and other senior U.S. intelligence officials appeared before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence as part of the annual threat briefing on dangers to U.S. security.

"Attacking the United States homeland, United States interests overseas and United States allies -- in that order -- are al Qaeda's top operational priorities," he said.

"The group will attempt high-impact attacks for as long as its central command structure is functioning and affiliated groups are capable of furthering its interests because even modest operational capabilities can yield a deadly and damaging attack."

Democrats at the hearing questioned the intelligence officials about the legality of the once-secret National Security Agency electronic eavesdropping program.

"We believe that all these activities are being undertaken in full compliance with our Constitution and with the laws of our country," Mr. Negroponte said, noting that the program to monitor suspected al Qaeda overseas phone calls to the United States has helped in dealing with the terrorist threat.

The top-secret NSA program was exposed by the New York Times. The revelation has hurt U.S. intelligence, said Porter Goss, director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

"The damage has been very severe to our capabilities to carry out our mission," Mr. Goss told the committee. "There has been an erosion of the culture of secrecy."

Sen. Pat Roberts, Kansas Republican and committee chairman, said, "Our enemies are continually probing our defenses and adjusting their tactics in an attempt to launch a successful mass casualty attack."

As in past threat assessments, Mr. Negroponte said al Qaeda is pursuing nuclear, chemical and biological weapons for its attacks, but its most likely method will be the use of conventional explosives.

Nearly 40 terrorist organizations or similar groups have used, acquired or shown interest in weapons of mass destruction, he said.

The merger of al Qaeda with the Iraq-based terror group headed by Abu Musab al Zarqawi has extended the reach of the group and broadened its ideological appeal.

For the first time, U.S. intelligence has learned al Qaeda's vision from a letter from al Qaeda's No. 2 leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. The group believes its terrorist activities in Iraq are a "steppingstone" to the creation of a global Islamist "caliphate," or ruling regime.

Mr. Negroponte said a "homegrown" U.S. version of al Qaeda affiliated terrorists was uncovered last year in Lodi, Calif.

Regarding Iraq, Mr. Negroponte said an Islamist victory over the new government "could secure an operational base in Iraq and inspire sympathizers elsewhere to move beyond rhetoric to attempt attacks against neighboring Middle Eastern nations, against Europe, and even the United States."

Zarqawi's terrorist activities in Iraq could lead to a similar outcome. "His capture would deprive the movement of a notorious leader, whereas his continued acts of terror could enable him to expand his following beyond his organization in Iraq, much as bin Laden expanded al Qaeda in the 1990s," Mr. Negroponte said.

Mr. Negroponte said there are encouraging signs that Iraq is developing into a democratic system, noting that insurgents hold no territory and failed to disrupt two national elections.

However, insurgents are being fueled by Sunni Arab disaffection that "is likely to remain high in 2006," he said.

"Even if a broad, inclusive national government emerges, there almost certainly will be a lag time before we see a dampening effect on the insurgency," Mr. Negroponte said.

The most extreme insurgents, like those under Zarqawi, "will remain unreconciled and continue to attack Iraqis and coalition forces," he said.

On arms proliferation, Mr. Negroponte said dangerous weapons and missiles in Iran and North Korea are the second major threat to U.S. security. "We are most concerned about the threat and destabilizing effect of nuclear proliferation," he said.

Iran's nuclear program was described by Mr. Negroponte as a developing problem, even though Tehran probably does not yet have a weapon and has not produced the fuel for nuclear bombs. "Nevertheless, the danger that it will acquire a nuclear weapon and the ability to integrate it with ballistic missiles Iran already possesses is a reason for immediate concern," he said.

On North Korea, Mr. Negroponte said Pyongyang views its nuclear arsenal as a way to counter U.S. and allied forces and prevent the ouster of the Kim Jong-il communist regime.

In Latin America, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez is continuing to "constrict democracy" and increase ties with the government of Cuba, as well as the regimes in Iran and North Korea, he said.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20060202-114322-4401r.htm>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Boston Globe

February 3, 2006

Rumsfeld: Terrorism Threat May Be Greater

Says extremists have 'global reach'

By Lolita C. Baldor, Associated Press

WASHINGTON -- Despite progress in fighting terrorism, the threat today may be greater than ever before because the weapons available are far more dangerous, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said yesterday.

"The enemy -- while weakened and under great pressure -- is still capable of global reach, still possesses the determination to kill more Americans, and still trying to do so with increasingly powerful weapons," Rumsfeld said at the National Press Club.

The US strategy, he said, includes doing everything possible to prevent the enemy from gaining weapons of mass destruction, improving homeland defense and intelligence gathering, and helping friendly nations become better able to fight the terrorists in their own countries.

"Because they lurk in shadows, without visible armies, and are willing to wait long periods between attacks, there is a tendency to underestimate the threat they pose," Rumsfeld said. He said there are no fewer than 18 organizations, loosely connected with Al Qaeda, conducting terrorist attacks.

Rumsfeld described the stakes in stark terms.

"They will either succeed in changing our way of life, or we will succeed in changing theirs," he said.

During a question-and-answer session, a protester stood and shouted at Rumsfeld, accusing him of pressing an unjust war, before being escorted from the room. Once she was gone, Rumsfeld remarked, "We'll count her as undecided."

Addressing the war in Iraq, Rumsfeld said the time has arrived for the Iraqis to take more responsibility for their own future, including quelling the insurgency and creating a unified government.

"They're going to have to grab ahold of their country and make it work," he said.

His remarks come as the Pentagon is preparing to release a broad four-year defense review that does not eliminate any major weapons programs but calls for more spending on special operations forces, cuts in Air Force personnel, and a restructuring of the Army and reserve forces.

Rumsfeld's speech also touched on the idea that Americans must be braced for a long war on terror, a theme that both Rumsfeld and President Bush have pressed in recent days. And Rumsfeld again warned that the only way terrorists win is if the United States loses its will to continue the fight in Iraq.

The administration has faced a growing public uneasiness with the Iraq war, which is costing more than \$4 billion a month and has left more than 2,240 service members dead. Military officials have said that US forces will pull out of Iraq as the Iraqi forces become more able to take over their country's security.

The Pentagon hopes to drop the total number of troops in Iraq to below 100,000 before the end of 2006, but officials say any reductions will be based on the conditions there.

http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2006/02/03/rumsfeld_terrorism_threat_may_be_greater/

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times
February 3, 2006

In Another Threat, Iran Warns It May Block Inspections

By Elaine Sciolino

VIENNA, Feb. 2 — Iran formally notified the International Atomic Energy Agency on Thursday that it would end all "voluntary" nuclear cooperation with the agency if, as expected, its 35-country board referred Iran's nuclear activity case to the United Nations Security Council.

If the threat, in a letter from Ali Larijani, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, to Mohamed ElBaradei, the director of the agency, is carried out, inspectors will no longer be permitted to conduct spot inspections and will lose access to crucial sites, including several military areas that have aroused the agency's suspicions.

In addition, Iran has said it will resume its program to build 50,000 centrifuges at Natanz and begin full-scale production of enriched uranium, which can be used to produce electricity or to build nuclear bombs.

Iran delivered its threat as John D. Negroponte, the director of national intelligence, told the Senate Intelligence Committee that "we judge that Tehran probably does not yet have a nuclear weapon and probably has not yet produced or acquired the necessary fissile material" to produce one.

Nevertheless, he said, "the danger that it will acquire a nuclear weapon and the ability to integrate it with ballistic missiles Iran already possesses is a reason for immediate concern."

Mr. Negroponte made no estimate of how much time Iran would require to produce a weapon. But he focused on the new government's increasingly strident threats against Israel, and said, "The regime today is more confident and assertive than it has been since the early days of the Islamic republic."

That assertiveness was clear in Mr. Larijani's letter, which put into writing a threat that several Iranian officials have made orally.

Iran "would have no other choice but to suspend all the voluntary measures and extra cooperation with the agency," the letter said. "In that case, the agency's monitoring would extensively be limited and all the peaceful nuclear activities being under voluntary suspension would be resumed without any restriction."

The letter was delivered as the board opened talks on a resolution sponsored by Britain, France and Germany that for the first time would open the door to possible Security Council action against Iran.

The resolution was challenged by the 16-country nonaligned bloc, which proposed amendments deleting all references to the Security Council and keeping Iran's case the responsibility of the nuclear agency.

But the resolution as drafted enjoys the support of the United States, Russia and China, and is expected to win passage. Only Cuba, Syria and Venezuela have said they will definitely vote against it.

Iran would not be violating any treaty obligations if it carried out its threat. But the action would almost certainly further erode confidence in Tehran as a reliable negotiating partner and fuel suspicion that its nuclear program was not peaceful.

In various public statements, Iranian officials, including President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, have explained that Iran is obliged under a law passed last year to end voluntary monitoring activities if its case is reported to the Security Council.

Mr. Larijani has assured the I.A.E.A. that Iran has no intention of withdrawing from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, a senior agency official said.

But "voluntary" measures are different, and refer to Iran's de facto implementation of the treaty's 1997 "additional protocol," which gives expanded rights to the agency to inspect a country's facilities. Iran has signed the protocol but has not ratified it, so is not obliged to comply with it.

The letter delivered Thursday means Iran has rejected the demands of the five permanent members of the Security Council — the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain — as well as Germany and Dr. ElBaradei himself, that Iran once again close its uranium enrichment plant at Natanz.

The plant was shut down under a November 2004 agreement with France, Britain and Germany that froze Iran's enrichment activities while the two sides negotiated economic and political incentives for Tehran. Tired of waiting for the rewards, Iran last month reopened part of the plant for what it called research, but it has yet to operate any of the machinery or process any uranium.

Dr. ElBaradei sought to calm fears about the looming referral to the Security Council. "We are reaching a critical phase, but not a crisis," he told reporters on Thursday, adding that there would still be a monthlong "window of opportunity" before the Security Council could take up the issue. He said the threat was not "imminent," a word that he appeared to choose carefully to tamp down discussion of turning to a military solution.

On Wednesday evening, Robert Joseph, the under secretary of state for proliferation issues, said in a speech, "The president has repeatedly emphasized that all options are on the table to deal with the threat from Iran, but that our strong preference is to do so through effective diplomacy."

Until Thursday night, Iran's delegation was struggling with Dr. ElBaradei to find a face-saving formula that would allow Tehran to keep Natanz open but essentially nonoperational, said two officials involved in the talks.

In a last-ditch effort to avoid any involvement of the Security Council, Dr. ElBaradei met with Iranian officials at their request at his home, the officials said. But the Iranian side offered no new substantive concessions, they said.

Even on Thursday, multilateral diplomacy continued, as the senior Russian and Chinese nuclear negotiators met in Tehran to press Iran's leaders to avoid a crisis and close Natanz.

The Iranian letter reflects the victory of the faction in Iran that has argued, even before the victory of a hard-liner, Mr. Ahmadinejad, as president last summer, that the Europeans had not reached the nuclear agreement with Iran in good faith and were determined to permanently deprive Iran of its right to develop a fuel cycle for peaceful purposes.

As evidence, Iranian negotiators continually refer to a lengthy implementation document presented last August by the Europeans that asked Iran to give up two rights guaranteed under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty: its right to enrich uranium to produce electricity, and its right to withdraw from the treaty if its security is threatened.

Indeed, in demanding that Iran close Natanz, the international community is essentially reinterpreting the treaty by holding Iran to a higher standard than other countries because, the United States and other countries argue, Iran cannot be trusted with the technology to produce nuclear fuel that can also be used for weapons.

David E. Sanger contributed reporting from Washington for this article.

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/03/international/middleeast/03iran.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all&oref=slogin

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Nuclear Weapons: NNSA Needs to Refine and More Effectively Manage Its New Approach for Assessing and Certifying Nuclear Weapons.

GAO-06-261, February 3. <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-06-261>

Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d06261high.pdf>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)