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New York Times
November 19, 2005

Bush And Putin Want Iran To Treat Uranium In Russia

By David E. Sanger and William J. Broad

PUSAN, South Korea, Nov. 18 - Presenting a united front against Iran, President Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia said Friday that they would press Iran to reverse itself and accept a compromise allowing it to enrich uranium, but only in Russia and under strict controls.

The plan would let Iran enrich uranium only to levels suitable for use in nuclear reactors, using Russian technology. "We hope that over time Iran will see the virtue of this approach, and it may provide a way out," Mr. Bush's national security adviser, Stephen J. Hadley, told reporters here on Friday, after the two leaders met.

Separately, the International Atomic Energy Agency issued a new report about Iran to its board on Friday, showing that Iran was offered information in 1987 that could have helped it cast uranium into the precise shapes needed to build the core of a nuclear bomb.

The engineering drawings were offered by Abdul Qadeer Khan, the Pakistani head of what was the world's largest nuclear black market, but Iran said it never sought the information. It has previously acknowledged buying centrifuges from the Khan network, but said it used them to enrich uranium for commercial power reactors, not atomic bombs.

While the report made no reference to weaponry, it indicated that the Khan network offered to help Iran shape uranium metal into "hemispherical forms," which arms experts said suggested the making of bomb cores.

The report made no reference to information from what American officials contend is a stolen Iranian laptop computer. The officials have said in recent briefings with allies that the information on the computer indicates work toward developing an atomic weapon.

The report noted some increased cooperation by Iran since the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency voted in September that Iran had withheld important data and threatened to refer the country to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions. But the referral would require another vote, which Russia and China have opposed.

Until a few days ago, the United States seemed poised to press for a vote on the issue when the agency's board meets late next week. But in recent days, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who attended the meeting with Mr. Putin, has signaled that she may delay that vote again, perhaps in hopes of gathering more votes.

"The Russians are getting very, very frustrated with the refusal of the Iranians to move to a middle ground," one senior American official said. A senior Russian delegation that went to Tehran last week was unable to persuade the Iranians to consider giving up enriching uranium on their own soil, the American officials said.

Mr. Bush's meeting with Mr. Putin here, on the edges of the annual Asian economic summit, was partly intended to close differences between Washington and Moscow about how to deal with Iran.

But the two men also discussed oil, North Korea's nuclear program and growing American concerns that Mr. Putin is rolling back democratic advances that Russia has made in the past decade.

Most recently, the administration has been pressuring Mr. Putin on new legislation introduced by Mr. Putin's party last week in the Duma, the lower house of Parliament. The legislation would prevent foreign nongovernmental organizations from opening offices in Russia and would prevent Russian organizations that engage in political activity from getting money from outside the country.

Russian officials appear particularly concerned about human rights groups that focus on Chechnya and groups that they worry could help finance a political opposition.

Mr. Hadley said the proposed law "was a subject of discussion today," but called the talk confidential and said it was best conducted "outside of public view."

Under the nuclear plan proposed by Russia and endorsed by Britain, France and Germany - which are leading the talks with Iran - Tehran would be permitted to continue to convert raw uranium into a gas form, called uranium hexafluoride. That gas can be enriched if processed by high-speed centrifuges, which made up most of the technology Dr. Khan's network sold Iran in 1987 and in deals that resumed in 1994.

Under the new plan, Iran would no longer be able to enrich uranium on its soil. The Iranian government has said it will never give up its right to enrich, under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Mr. Hadley, in describing the proposed compromise in public for the first time on Friday, said that Iran, "while retaining its right to enrichment and reprocessing, would, nonetheless, find it in its interest to give up that right in terms of its own territory."

An enrichment facility would be built in Russia, "in which Iran would have management and financial interest, but not a technical interest," he added. In other words, Iran would have no control over the level to which the uranium is enriched, preventing it from making bomb fuel.

"This is an interesting idea," Mr. Hadley said. "The Iranians, probably not surprisingly, initially have said no." But he said he hoped Iran would come around.

Russia would benefit financially from the deal, and would hope to also attract enrichment business from other nations. But Russian authorities were frustrated by the reception they have gotten so far from Iran. Mohamed ElBaradei, the director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, has put off visiting the country in coming days because he did not want to come away empty-handed.

As for the atomic agency's disclosure about casting and forming uranium metal into hemispheres, it is no secret that such shapes are often a prerequisite for making a nuclear bomb. Books tell how two hemispheres of uranium or plutonium are joined to make a weapon's spherical core.

Although reports this year on the Iranian program disclosed Dr. Khan's offer of uranium casting expertise to Iran, and the possibility of its application to nuclear arms, they made no mention of the signature geometry of the hemispheres.

In interviews Friday in the United States, scientists who have designed nuclear arms said the details of Dr. Khan's offer made it clear that the sensitive information was probably intended for the development of nuclear arms, rather than reactors.

"They point pretty heavily to a weapons interest," said Siegfried S. Hecker, director of the Los Alamos weapons laboratory in New Mexico from 1986 to 1997 and now a visiting professor at Stanford University.

Dr. Hecker added that some elements of the offer could be applied to reactors, but that others had no use other than in nuclear arms.

"It signals pretty clearly that he's giving a recipe for bomb production," Dr. Hecker said.

Ray E. Kidder, a retired weapon designer at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California, agreed. "It's reasonably clear that this would be related to bombs," he said, noting that uranium and plutonium hemispheres could aid arms research as well being used to make bomb cores.

As for the laptop computer, American officials have said in secret briefings that it contained more than 1,000 pages of documents, written in Persian, showing what they described as a long Iranian effort to design a nuclear warhead. Nuclear experts in Europe and the United States who have examined the documents have said the computer contained no plans for the ball of radioactive fuel in a bomb's core, but instead showed studies for the surrounding nose cone as well as essential bomb components, like a telltale sphere of detonators of the kind used to trigger an atomic explosion. Many analysts in Europe and the United States have interpreted such information as indicating that the Iranians are trying to design a nuclear warhead.

However, some analysts have disagreed, saying an impostor could have forged the documents. Others have raised the possibility that rogue Iranian missile scientists did the studies without the knowledge of central authorities in Tehran.

Officials of the International Atomic Energy Agency said the new report made no mention of the information from the computer because the claims had emerged only in secretive briefings rather than as part of the agency's formal agenda. So far, the United States has refused to declassify the computer information, making it impossible for the agency to seek a detailed explanation from the Iranians.

David E. Sanger reported from Pusan for this article, and William J. Broad from New York.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/19/international/middleeast/19iran.html>

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New York Times
November 21, 2005

Iran Parliament Votes To Close Atomic Sites To U.N. Monitors

By Nazila Fathi

TEHRAN, Nov. 20 - The Iranian Parliament on Sunday approved the outline of a bill that would bar United Nations inspectors from its nuclear sites if the agency referred Iran's case to the Security Council for possible punitive measures.

The board of governors of the United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency is expected to review Iran's case when it meets Thursday. The atomic agency passed a resolution in September and called on Iran to suspend all uranium enrichment-related activities before the meeting.

The bill needs the approval of the Guardian Council, which has final say over all government actions, to become law. But the approval on Sunday, by 183 of the 197 lawmakers present, suggests that Parliament backs the government's tougher stance on its nuclear program.

"By approving this bill, we are sending a message to the atomic agency," said Aladdin Boroujerdi, the head of Parliament's Commission for Foreign Policy and National Security, urging the agency not to act against Iran.

"Otherwise, we require the government to suspend all its voluntary measures," he said, according to the ISNA student news agency. Mr. Boroujerdi was referring to Iran allowing inspection of its nuclear sites.

Iran defied an agreement with Britain, France and Germany in August and resumed activities at a nuclear site near Isfahan.

It further complicated diplomacy last week after it fed a new batch of uranium into the plant. The work includes converting mined uranium, or yellowcake, into a gas known as uranium tetrafluoride, or UF₄, a step before enrichment. In his report on Friday, Mohamed ElBaradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, praised Iran's "transparency and indispensable" cooperation but urged it to suspend enrichment-related activities and to allow inspectors to visit Lavizan-Shian, a military site near Tehran.

The United States accused Iran last year of dismantling buildings at Lavizan-Shian and removing topsoil from the area to hide experiments related to nuclear weapons. Iran said the razed construction was not related to military or nuclear work.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hamid Reza Assefi, said Sunday that Iran would allow the inspectors to visit that site only if they could provide "concrete proof" of activity related to weapons. "They cannot just say we want to talk to this or that person and keep dragging out the case," he said. "They should tell us their aims, and these aims should be towards closing the case."

He brushed off references in the report to blueprints of nuclear designs, saying they were "baseless" and "media speculation."

The report said Iran had turned over a document - which it had never used - that said that in 1987 it obtained blueprints of nuclear information from a network run by Abdul Qadeer Khan, the father of Pakistan's atomic program.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/21/international/middleeast/21iran.html>

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Boston Globe
November 22, 2005

2 Sentenced In Case Tied To India's Nuclear Missiles

By Raja Mishra, Globe Staff

Ending a national security case stretching back to 1988, two New England defense company executives have been sentenced to one year of home detention and three years' probation for illegally selling India technology that made its nuclear missiles more accurate.

A decade after a jury returned guilty verdicts, a federal judge sentenced Walter L. Lachman, 72, of Concord, and Maurice H. Subilia Jr., 58, of Kennebunkport, Maine. In addition to home detention and probation, Subilia will have to serve six months in a halfway house for committing perjury. Both men were also fined \$250,000, as was Fiber Materials Inc., the Biddeford, Maine, firm they ran.

The case traces back to April 1988, when Lachman, chief executive of Fiber Materials, and Subilia, president of the company, conspired to export a control panel made by their firm to the Defense Research Development Laboratory in India. India, already a declared nuclear power, was working on ballistic missiles that could carry nuclear warheads, according to federal prosecutors.

Critical to the missiles was a material called carbon-carbon, used on missile nosetips, rocket nozzles, and reentry heatshields to help maneuver through the ultra-hot and turbulent atmosphere. The control panel from Fiber Materials would help operate a production-sized isostatic press used to produce carbon-carbon.

At the time, a special export license from the federal government was required to sell such equipment to India.

Lachman and Subilia did not obtain the license, according to federal prosecutors. Federal officials sought to control such sales out of fear that a bolstered Indian nuclear offensive program could destabilize Asia.

In 1991 and 1992, Subilia and Fiber Materials sent employees to India to help install and use the control panel to run the carbon-carbon making process. In fact, the Indian government has since publicly boasted about use of carbon-carbon shields as an advance in its missile program.

The men and their firm were convicted in March 1995. They filed motions to throw out the conviction, and US District Judge Douglas P. Woodlock took eight years to rule. In 2003, he dismissed the convictions on the grounds that the federal export rules were unconstitutionally vague, while still calling the defendants' actions "fundamentally reprehensible." The charges were reinstated by a federal appeals court.

Last Friday, after a hearing, Woodlock handed down the sentences, taking into consideration, he said, the length of the delay.

http://www.boston.com/news/local/articles/2005/11/22/2_sentenced_in_case_tied_to_indias_nuclear_missiles/

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New York Times
November 22, 2005

Europe Moves Toward Delay Of Iran Referral

By Steven R. Weisman

WASHINGTON, Nov. 21 - The leading countries of Europe conferred about Iran on Monday, with growing indications that they would not move later this week to refer Iran's recent actions in its nuclear program to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions.

Western diplomats said it remained important to keep a consensus on Iran, not only between Europe and the United States but also with China, Russia and India, all of which have said they oppose a referral to the Security Council at this time.

The diplomats, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the talks while they were in progress, also said no final decision had been made about whether to seek a referral at the next opportunity, a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency's board on Thursday. The senior American envoy on Iran said talks with the Europeans were continuing.

"It's a period of great fluidity, diplomatically," said the envoy, R. Nicholas Burns, the under secretary of state for political affairs. He added that he found his recent talks with the Europeans, the Chinese and the Russians encouraging because "a wider circle of countries" was working "to send one message to Iran."

If Iran's case is not referred to the Security Council on Thursday by the atomic agency, its next opportunity would be well into next year.

American officials say that one topic of discussion with Iran is a recent offer by Russia to enrich uranium for Iran to use for energy purposes, thus preventing Iran from enriching uranium itself to the point at which it could be used to make a bomb.

Iran, however, has warned that if it is referred to the Security Council, it would bar United Nations inspectors from its nuclear sites.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/22/international/europe/22iran.html>

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Washington Times

November 22, 2005

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U.S. Seen Vulnerable To Space 'Pulse' Attack

By Bill Gertz, The Washington Times

The United States is highly vulnerable to attack from electronic pulses caused by a nuclear blast in space, according to a new book on threats to U.S. security.

A single nuclear weapon carried by a ballistic missile and detonated a few hundred miles over the United States would cause "catastrophe for the nation" by damaging electricity-based networks and infrastructure, including computers and telecommunications, according to "War Footing: 10 Steps America Must Take to Prevail in the War for the Free World."

"This is the single most serious national-security challenge and certainly the least known," said Frank J. Gaffney Jr. of the Center for Security Policy, a former Pentagon official and lead author of the book, which includes contributions by 34 security and intelligence specialists.

An electromagnetic-pulse (EMP) attack uses X-rays and gamma rays produced in a nuclear blast in three separate waves of pulses, each with more damaging effects, and would take months or years to repair, the book states. The damage to unshielded electronics would be irreversible.

The EMP danger was highlighted recently by a special congressional commission that has received little public attention and is considered a unique way for rogue states such as North Korea and Iran, or other enemies such as al Qaeda, to use nuclear weapons in the future.

Al Qaeda is known to be seeking nuclear weapons, according to documents uncovered at the terrorist group's facilities in Afghanistan.

The group could use a freighter equipped with a short-range ballistic missile to fire a nuclear missile over the United States, the book said, noting that North Korea sells its own version of the Scud for around \$100,000.

North Korea, in recent nuclear talks in Beijing, threatened to export its nuclear weapons, and Iran already has tested a Scud-missile launch from a ship.

An EMP attack would damage the national power grid, unprotected computers and all devices containing microchips, from medical instruments to military communications, and knock out electronic systems in cars, airplanes and those used in banking and finance and emergency services.

"An EMP attack potentially represents a high-tech means for terrorists to kill millions of Americans the old-fashioned way, through starvation and disease," the book said.

"Although the direct physical effects of EMP are harmless to people, a well-designed and well-executed EMP attack could kill indirectly far more Americans than a nuclear weapon detonated in our most populous city."

North Korea has been learning about EMP weapons from Russia, which is believed to have worked on EMPs for decades. China is also working on EMP arms, according to a recent Pentagon report.

The book calls for taking 10 actions to protect the free world from an array of 21st-century threats, including hardening U.S. infrastructures against an EMP attack and countering Islamist fascism through ideological counterproposals.

<http://www.washtimes.com/national/20051121-103434-8775r.htm>

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New York Times

November 22, 2005

At Entry Points, on the Lookout for Symptoms

By [JOHN M. BRODER](#)

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 21 - Expanding an old weapon in the struggle against infectious disease, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has opened 10 new quarantine stations at major ports of entry in the past 18 months and plans to add several more in the coming year.

The United States now has medical officers at 17 airports and at the busy border crossing in El Paso to screen people entering the country for communicable diseases. They are particularly alert for travelers showing symptoms of the deadly [avian influenza virus](#) that has spread across Asia and into Europe.

The avian flu strain, known as H5N1, has forced the slaughter of millions of chickens and other fowl and has caused 67 human deaths as of late last week, according to the World Health Organization. The virus, while affecting huge numbers of birds, is not yet efficiently transmitted among people. But medical authorities fear that the virus could mutate into a lethal human [flu](#) strain and touch off a global [pandemic](#) that could kill millions. Dr. William R. Mac Kenzie, the medical officer at the C.D.C. quarantine station at Los Angeles International Airport, said things were quiet in his small office. He receives one or two reports a week from international airlines reporting passengers with flu-like symptoms. Those travelers are examined and asked about where they had traveled and whether they had contact with live birds.

No such cases have arisen, Dr. Mac Kenzie said, but if one did, the passenger would not be detained but referred to a local hospital. Because there are few cases of human-to-human infection, the remaining passengers on the aircraft would not be quarantined, he said.

"At this point, we're not actively looking for sniffles and coughs," Dr. Mac Kenzie said. "Of course, that could change if there was a change in the transmission pattern and human-to-human infection becomes common."

The posting of medical officers at ports and the use of a quarantine to slow or stop the entry of disease-carrying travelers dates to the epidemic of bubonic plague in the 14th century, when the authorities in Venice required ships arriving from infected countries to remain at anchor in the port for 40 days before anyone could disembark. The term quarantine comes from Italian for 40 days - quaranta giorni.

In the United States, during an outbreak of yellow fever, Congress passed legislation in 1878 giving federal authorities the power to declare a quarantine to stop the spread of the disease. That power was expanded in 1892, when [cholera](#) began showing up in immigrants. Extensive screening of immigrants for a variety of diseases became commonplace at American ports, and many people were quarantined before being admitted as permanent residents. The quarantine program essentially died in the 1970's with the eradication of [smallpox](#) and several other communicable diseases. But the perceived need for greater medical surveillance at American borders has gained new attention since 2001, when the anthrax attacks brought a new fear of biological terrorism.

In late 2002 and 2003, cases of [severe acute respiratory syndrome](#) were seen among international travelers entering the United States and Canada from Asia, prompting Congress and the C.D.C. to reinvigorate the quarantine program.

"The SARS outbreak was an excellent illustration of the rapidity in which infectious diseases can spread throughout the world, given the rapid means of transportation," said Dr. Ram Koppaka, chief of the quarantine and border health services branch of the C.D.C.

Dr. Koppaka said that before the SARS outbreak, the United States had not posted medical officers at its quarantine stations for more than 40 years. But the threat of various strains of influenza, as well as other exotic diseases like the Ebola virus, warranted more stringent medical screening, he said.

Dr. Koppaka said the C.D.C. had also dispatched health officers to a number of Asian countries to work with local authorities to contain the outbreak before it could reach the United States.

The avian flu is still chiefly a bird disease, with only 130 human cases reported, all in Asia, officials said. But if an infected person were to enter the United States, there is a good chance that he or she would arrive at Los Angeles International Airport, the port of entry for 22 percent of air travelers arriving from Asia.

Travelers entering from countries where the bird flu has been reported are not routinely questioned or informed about warning signs of the disease, as they were during the SARS epidemic. Japan, however, is beginning to ask travelers entering from affected countries to have their shoes disinfected at airports to prevent poultry manure, believed to carry the disease, from entering the country. The virus has not appeared in birds or humans in Japan.

Dr. Jonathan E. Fielding, the director of public health for Los Angeles County, said that his office received frequent reports of ill travelers during the SARS outbreak and that the United States was fortunate the disease did not become more widespread here.

Dr. Fielding said that if the avian flu strain that has proved deadly in people in Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and China were to develop into a highly communicable human disease, it would be almost impossible to

stop at the border. The virus has also shown up among birds in Laos, Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Romania.

"We may well catch people early, but to assume we can prevent entry in all cases simply by increasing surveillance is very optimistic," Dr. Fielding said. "The reason we're freaked out is we don't know the likelihood that this could be transformed into a virus that could be easily transmitted from person to person."

Dr. Fielding and other health officers around the country are scrambling to stockpile antiviral medicines and planning for a potential surge in hospital admissions. Dr. Fielding pointed out that the fatality rate for people who have contracted the virus is roughly 50 percent.

For now, the likelihood of avian flu mutating into a highly contagious human strain is relatively small, said Dr. Scott P. Layne, an associate professor of epidemiology at the University of California, Los Angeles, who has studied avian flu for eight years.

But if mutation occurs, he said, the consequences will be devastating.

"All of this sounds like bad science fiction," Dr. Layne said, "but if it does get going in people, it will have major consequences on the medical level, the scientific level, the economic level and the societal level."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/11/22/health/22quarantine.html>

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Los Angeles Times

November 23, 2005

The West Signals Patient Approach On Iran

A referral to the U.N. Security Council seems unlikely amid Russia's efforts to persuade Tehran to give up some nuclear activities.

By Alissa J. Rubin, Times Staff Writer

VIENNA - Western countries trying to persuade Iran to give up technology that can be used to make nuclear weapons have decided to let negotiations continue rather than force a confrontation with Tehran at this week's meeting of the U.N. nuclear agency, diplomats indicated Tuesday.

The International Atomic Energy Agency's governing board is to meet Thursday in Vienna to discuss whether Iran has complied sufficiently with a September resolution. If board members were to determine that Iran has fallen short, they could refer the country to the United Nations Security Council for consideration of sanctions.

Despite Iran's refusal to freeze its efforts to develop nuclear fuel cycle technology, Western countries are signaling that they are unlikely to press for referral because they want to encourage negotiations underway between Iran and Russia.

They also are hoping that Iran will return to talks with Britain, France and Germany.

At a Tuesday briefing, Gregory Schulte, the U.S. ambassador to international organizations in Vienna, made no mention of a push for referral at this week's meeting and instead publicly endorsed Russia's involvement in the talks and the efforts by the three European Union nations, known as the EU-3, to find a negotiated solution.

"We strongly support the effort of the EU-3 to broaden the international consensus," he said. "We think it is very important [that] the EU-3 has worked with Russia to bring additional pressure to their [negotiations]."

The focal point of the talks with Russia concerns the sensitive process of enriching uranium. Enriched uranium can be used either in nuclear weapons or power plants. Iran contends that its nuclear program is for generating electricity, but the U.S. and other nations fear it is secretly trying to develop atomic weapons.

Moscow has proposed that the raw uranium that Iran is converting into gas at its plant in Esfahan be enriched at a plant in Russia. Iran would have a substantial financial interest in the Russian plant.

In exchange for giving up direct control over the most sensitive part of the nuclear fuel cycle, Iran would also get political, economic and technological aid from the European Union.

President Bush said last week that he backed the Russian initiative. The European nations, plus Russia and Iran, are expected to meet Dec. 6 for further talks, said an IAEA official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. Iran has sent mixed signals in response to Russia's offer.

If the EU and the United States accept the Russian proposal, as they appear ready to do, they would be backtracking from their position that Iran has to give up all aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle — including converting uranium yellowcake into gas.

However, with Iran now converting its second batch of yellowcake into gas and Western countries continuing diplomatic efforts, it appears that they have reconciled themselves to the idea of Iran possessing and using technology at the early stage of the nuclear cycle.

The EU and the United States are also willing to delay a Security Council referral because it seems doubtful that the IAEA board, which typically operates on the basis of consensus, would endorse such a move with Russia still in

talks with Iran. Even if a majority of board members approved a referral, Russia and China would probably abstain or vote against sanctions on the Security Council — leaving in question the effectiveness of such a move. At its September meeting, the IAEA board was divided on whether to even consider sending Iran to the Security Council; 12 of the 35 members abstained from a vote on the resolution that set in motion the mechanism for referral, and one country, Venezuela, voted against it.

"The American language isn't tough lately, which reflects ... that the administration is trying to signal to Iran and Russia that the U.S. is not on the warpath and that it's not a repeat of Iraq," said George Perkovich of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, who has followed the negotiations. "A lot of countries are worried about a repeat of Iraq, and their sense is that once you get to the Security Council, it's a slippery slope," he said.

Times staff writer Maggie Farley at the United Nations and special correspondent Julia Damianova in Vienna contributed to this report.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-iran23nov23,1,4700525.story?coll=la-headlines-world&ctrack=1&cset=true>

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