

In the Press

A weekly account of Iran in the International Press

First week of November, 2004

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Tehran risking a serious showdown



US attack on Iran 'inconceivable' says Straw

AFP, Nov. 4, London - Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said it was "inconceivable" that the United States would attack Iran over its nuclear programme.

"I don't see any circumstances in which military action would be justified against Iran full stop," Straw told BBC radio amid speculation that re-elected US President George W. Bush may be more hawkish over the Islamic republic.

Asked if the world would support a US bombing campaign against Iran, Straw said: "Not only is that inconceivable, but I think the prospect of it (US military action) happening is inconceivable."

"The United States governments have operated internationally and with international cooperation in respect of Iran," he said Thursday. Straw added that the international community was committed to resolving the situation "constructively".



Tehran will not back down from its nuclear program – Iranian opposition leader

Al-Safer semi-weekly, Nov. 3 - Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, leader of the National Council of Resistance of Iran in an interview on Oct. 27 with Italy's *Corriere della Sera* daily said: The Iranian regime can not withdraw from its programs in return for the incentives offered by the EU. Mrs. Rajavi noted that there are no moderates in Iran, adding, "A domestic poll revealed that 94% of Iranians want a regime change."

Asked whether the Iranian government is ready for hostility over its nuclear program, the Iranian Resistance's president-elect replied: "The regime wants to acquire the bomb because it sees it as a guarantee for maintaining its schemes for the region."



Germany pledges to work with US on Tehran

Reuters, Nov. 3, Berlin - Despite past differences with Washington, Germany pledged on Wednesday to work with whoever wins the U.S. presidential election to stabilize Iraq and ensure Iran did not obtain nuclear weapons...

Karsten Voigt, coordinator for German-American relations in the German Foreign Ministry, pointed to Iran as one area where close cooperation was urgent and necessary.

"In Iran there is clearly a need to work together," he said. "The Europeans – the British, French and Germans – are seeking a peaceful solution. But the goal is to prevent, together with the Americans, Iran gaining access to nuclear weapons."



BBC, Nov. 3 - Emma Edwin, the European Union spokesperson on International affairs, said, "It will be a mistake for the Islamic Republic to underestimate the significance of concerns over Iran's nuclear activities."



UN sanctions on Iran - Shalom

AFP, Nov. 3, Jerusalem - Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom called Wednesday for UN sanctions against Iran unless it called a complete halt to uranium enrichment.

"We hope the conclusions to be presented by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at the end of November in Vienna, will be straight and clear, so the UN Security Council can rule in favor of sanctions if Iran refuses to halt its nuclear programme," he told public radio.

"Iran is a threat to the entire world's stability because the country is developing a nuclear weapons programme, including long-range missiles that could reach London, Paris and parts of Russia," Shalom charged.

A bluff to mislead international community

AFP, Nov. 3, Moscow - Iran has the capacity to produce nuclear weapons but does not intend doing so, a senior Iranian official said here Wednesday.

"We do not intend making nuclear weapons," said Ali Akbar Soltan, deputy director-general of Iran's Foreign Ministry political department.

"If we had had such an intention, we would have done so a long time ago because Iran has the capacity to do so, especially talented scientists," Soltani told an international conference here...

"The IAEA would like to seek more steps to strengthen trust in Iran's nuclear programme, and Iran must take such steps," Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov was quoted as saying in the Tajik capital Dushanbe.

EU compromises with Iran on uranium enrichment

AFP, Nov. 2, Vienna - The European Union is no longer explicitly calling for an indefinite suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment, diplomats said, outlining a compromise proposal ahead of a crucial meeting with the Iranians on their nuclear programme.

The diplomats said ambassadors from Britain, France and Germany were Tuesday to hand over in Tehran the EU's written offer, ahead of a scheduled meeting with Iran in Paris on Friday on Europe's request for Iran to halt uranium enrichment, which can be used to make nuclear weapons.

"This paper fudges the uranium enrichment question by saying suspension needs to hold until the conclusion of negotiations over the long-term status of Iran's program," said a Western diplomat who requested anonymity.

It is "a very polished linguistic version, so to speak, to bypass that problem (indefinite suspension of enrichment)," another diplomat close to the talks said.

In Brussels, French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier urged Iran to produce a "lasting" halt to its uranium enrichment activities, carefully avoiding the word "indefinite" as signs emerged of a compromise deal between Iran and the EU.



Tehran risks serious showdown on nuclear plans

AFP, Nov. 2, Brussels - Iran must "stop the (uranium) fuel cycle", Fischer told reporters at an EU meeting here. "If we find a way I would be very happy. If not, we are moving forward in a very serious situation."...

"I don't think it's an issue coming to a head," British Europe Minister Denis MacShane said.

"We're working very closely... with the United States, and we're working through the IAEA in Vienna to get a solution that I think the entire international community, from Moscow to Washington, is agreed on," he said.

Dutch Foreign Minister Bernard Bot, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency, took note of recent hard-line statements by Iran's parliament but said: "We hope the Iranian government will give different signals."



El-Baradei: Tehran's information was changing, contradictory, and slow in coming

The Associated Press, Nov. 2, United Nations - The chief of the United Nations nuclear agency urged Iran and North Korea on Monday to prove their nuclear programs are peaceful and also called for tighter

controls to halt the globe's "extensive illicit market" in nuclear materials. In his annual report to the U.N. General Assembly, Mohamed ElBaradei said Iran should suspend its uranium enrichment program "as a confidence building measure"...

He told the General Assembly that "the most disturbing lesson" from the revelation of clandestine nuclear programs in Iran and Libya was "the existence of an extensive illicit market for the supply of nuclear items."....

Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Hossein Mousavian, said a compromise was possible. He held out the prospect of Iran suspending building additional facilities to enrich uranium if European countries make good on offers to provide fuel for planned nuclear-powered electricity plants.

Iran's deputy U.N. ambassador Mehdi Danesh-Yazdi told the General Assembly his country "is determined to pursue its inalienable rights to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes." He said negotiations with the Europeans "will bring fruit if mutual understanding, political will and good faith prevail."

ElBaradei told reporters Iran should act quickly on suspending enrichment to restore confidence with the international community after previously providing his agency with information "that was at times changing, contradictory, and slow in coming."



Khatami rules out definitive halt to enrichment activities

AFP, Nov. 2, Tebran - Iranian President Mohammad Khatami on Tuesday categorically ruled out a definitive halt to uranium enrichment as demanded by European states to end a standoff over its nuclear programme.

However, he said he was optimistic that negotiations with European states on the nuclear dossier would not result in Iran being brought before the UN Security Council for possible sanctions.

"Our nation must be given the assurance that it will not be stripped of its right (to enrich uranium)," Khatami told reporters.



Six-month freeze at max - Mousavian

Reuters, Nov. 1, Tebran - Asked how long Iran would be prepared to freeze enrichment for, Hossein Mousavian, foreign policy committee secretary of the

Supreme National Security Council, told Reuters: "We can agree to a period of two to three months, maximum six months, to finalize the package." But he said that if the EU maintained its position that Iran must scrap its nuclear fuel cycle capabilities, "then, if not now, in some months we will reach a confrontation."...

"The cessation of uranium enrichment is already rejected. It is our red line and if it is the Europeans' condition then it is better to leave the talks now." "(But) if the Europeans' concern is to be assured that Iran's (uranium) enrichment will never in the future be diverted from peaceful purposes... there's a very good chance of reaching a compromise."



Iran says no fear of UN or oil sanctions

AFP, Nov. 1, Tebran - A top aide to Iran's supreme leader declared Tehran did not fear being taken to the Security Council over its nuclear programme and warned if the UN imposed an oil embargo world prices would go above 100 usd a barrel.

Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri, one of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's closest advisors, dismissed as 'ridiculous' suggestions from Europe aimed at persuading Tehran to end uranium enrichment to avoid being summoned by the Security Council.



Chance of compromise with EU 50-50 - Mousavian

The Associated Press, Nov. 1, Tebran - Iran Defiant lawmakers - shouting "Death to America" - unanimously voted yesterday to approve the outline of a bill requiring the government to resume uranium enrichment, a move likely to deepen an international dispute over Tehran's atomic activities.

Nevertheless, Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Hossein Mousavian, told The Associated Press in an exclusive interview that a compromise could still be reached with European negotiators to avert the risk of U.N. sanctions.

While lawmakers were discussing the bill, Mousavian ruled out an indefinite suspension of enrichment activities. But he suggested Iran would consider halting the building of more nuclear facilities, which it would need to produce enough fuel for additional power plants. "I see the chance of a compromise before November as 50-50," Mousavian said.

"We have rejected two possibilities: cessation and unlimited suspension," he said. "We told the Europeans if your target is cessation, it will be impossible. But we are flexible if your proposal is balanced." Mousavian said some progress was "definitely" made during Iran's talks last week with Europeans, who he said "showed flexibility and understanding."



EU's offer to embolden mullahs, make a mockery of war on terror

Al-Manar Al-Yawm daily, Nov. 1 – The Europeans' absurd proposal to the clerical regime is a continuation of the same policy that, after the trip by the foreign ministers of the EU-trio last year, gave Iran's ruling terrorists 12 months' time to get closer to the A-bomb. Its outcome is nothing but to embolden the mullahs to continue their efforts for gaining access to nuclear weapons.

Moreover, accusing freedom-fighters of terrorism means nothing but making a mockery of the war on terrorism and encourages the mullahs to continue their terrorist crimes, particularly in Iraq. The clerical regime's repeated requests to place pressure and restrictions on the Iranian Resistance only indicate the regime's fear of certain downfall.



Majlis bill strengthens Iran's hand in talks with EU

AFP, Nov. 1, Vienna - The Iranian parliament's vote backing the resumption of uranium enrichment was mainly tactical, designed to strengthen Tehran's hand in nuclear talks with the EU, rather than a rejection of European demands for a halt to enrichment, diplomats said Monday.

"People are noting that it was a resolution, not ratified into law," a Western diplomat close to the Vienna-based nuclear watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) told AFP about the vote Sunday in Iran....

"The Iranians are trying to develop ways to put pressure on the Europeans, and this parliamentary vote is an example of that," a Non-Aligned Movement diplomat said.

Parliament approves uranium enrichment for Tehran

AFP, Oct. 31, Teheran - Iran's parliament passed a bill backing the resumption of uranium enrichment, as the government left the door open for further negotiations with Europe over the controversial practice...

In the conservative-dominated parliament the 247 lawmakers present out of a total of 290 "all approved the text", backing enrichment, parliament president Gholam Ali Haddad Adel said. The motion was passed to calls of "Death to America." He described the vote as a "message addressed to foreign countries that parliament will not give in to intimidation". The text tells the government "to take action for the country to master civilian nuclear technology, especially in the fuel production cycle"...

Deputy Said Abu Taleb said, "This law would have been good two months ago but it no longer has any value as the time has now passed. We must present a law that effectively ends the suspension of enrichment," he added.

Asefi urged the Europeans to "clarify what they mean" by saying a suspension of uranium enrichment will last until a long term deal is agreed.



Emboldened Tehran to demand calendar of cooperation from Europe

Agence France Presse, Oct. 31, Teheran - Iran is to ask European countries for a timetable as well as concrete commitments over future cooperation in nuclear energy if it is to agree to a permanent halt to uranium enrichment, a foreign ministry spokesman said.

Representatives from Germany, Britain and France are to meet Iranian officials on Friday in Paris to try to convince the country to renounce uranium enrichment and stave off the threat of being summoned before the UN Security Council over its nuclear activities.

"We are expecting from them a calendar of cooperation and we will insist on that point," foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told reporters. "We expect that in the course of this (Paris) meeting the Europeans will specify their precise commitments, concrete and clear, and the Islamic Republic will take the best decision in line with its own interests," he added. He also urged that the Europeans show the "flexibility necessary so that we can come to a result."



Iran sees small chance of UN economic sanctions

Reuters, Oct. 29, Tehran - Iran believes there is only a 10 percent chance the U.N. Security Council will impose economic sanctions on it if Washington succeeds in sending its nuclear case there, a senior security official said on Friday.

Hossein Mousavian, foreign policy committee secretary at the Supreme National Security Council, said Iran's past cooperation with U.N. inspectors and support from key non-Western states such as Russia and China would spare Iran.



US says 'time running out' for Iran to comply with nuclear demands

Agence France Presse, Oct. 29, Washington - The United States said Friday that "time is running out" for Iran to avoid being hauled before the UN Security Council for possible sanctions by complying with international demands to halt uranium enrichment activities and come clean on its suspect nuclear program. The State Department noted that next month's meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors was fast approaching and recalled that the IAEA had set a November deadline for Iran to comply with the threat of UN Security Council referral if it does not.

"Iran needs to agree to that and needs to be able to put the IAEA in a position to verify and report it," spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters. He declined to comment on whether the US position on bringing the matter to the Security Council might change depending on talks between Tehran and Europe's big three nations who are now trying to convince Iran to abandon uranium enrichment in return for concessions.

"Time is running out on the Iranians," Boucher said, noting that the talks Britain, France and Germany are having with Iran had yet to yield any result and that the IAEA board is scheduled to meet on November 25.



UN offers to guarantee nuke fuel for Iran - diplomats

Reuters, Oct. 29, Vienna - The U.N. nuclear watchdog has offered to guarantee Iran a supply of fuel for its nuclear power plants so that Tehran would not need to enrich its own uranium, Western diplomats said on Friday.

Diplomats said that the head of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mohamed ElBaradei, made this offer to help France, Britain and Germany in their talks with Iran aimed at persuading the Islamic republic to abandon its controversial uranium enrichment programme.

"ElBaradei and the IAEA have offered to guarantee Iran's fuel supply," a Western diplomat familiar with the European Union's negotiations with the Iranians.



Anxious EU trio to give immediate incentives to Tehran

Agence France Presse, Oct. 29, Vienna - Iran and the EU are to resume last-chance nuclear talks in Paris next week with time running out for Iran to accept the European offer for it to suspend uranium enrichment in order to avoid possible UN

Security Council sanctions, diplomats said in Vienna...

A Western diplomat said the European trio was meeting this Friday in Paris to prepare the session with Iran that will be next Friday and were considering giving Iran incentives immediately rather than have Tehran wait, and during this time suspend uranium enrichment, while a long-term agreement is hammered out. The Europeans "obviously don't want this process to die and are getting together a draft agreement on uranium suspension," the diplomat said....

[IAEA chief] ElBaradei has said it would take his agency 10 days to verify suspension, a Western diplomat said. "November 15 is a kind of logistical deadline for the IAEA," ahead of the November 25 meeting, the diplomat said.



Pope urges Iran to accept nuclear controls

Reuters, Oct. 29, Vatican City - Pope John Paul on Friday told Iran it had a duty to comply with international controls on nuclear proliferation...

The Pope, in his address to Ambassador Mohammad Javad Faridzadeh, grouped the issue of nuclear proliferation under an umbrella of topics he said concerned "the common good of humanity." Though his comments were couched in general terms, the leader of the world's one billion Catholics left little doubt he had in mind the current tension over Iran's nuclear program.

European offer flouts human rights – HR body

Radio France Internationale, Oct. 29 - The International Federation of Human Rights Unions in a statement declared its astonishment at a news report published by the French news agency indicating that France and two other European countries have proposed to the government of Iran to keep the name of the PMOI in the list of terrorist organizations in exchange for Iran's decision to curb its nuclear program. (The International Federation of Human Rights Unions) wrote that it considers such deals to flout all international ideals and laws, adding: The need to fight terrorism must not be tantamount to supporting regimes that violate human rights.



Missing arms possibly went to Iran

The Washington Times, Oct. 28 - John A. Shaw, the deputy undersecretary of defense for international technology security, said in an interview that he believes the Russian troops, working with Iraqi intelligence, "almost certainly" removed the high-explosive material that went missing from the Al-Qaqaa facility, south of Baghdad....

Most of Saddam's most powerful arms were systematically separated from other arms like mortars, bombs and rockets, and sent to Syria and Lebanon, and possibly to Iran, he said.

Iraqi officials accuse Iran of meddling



Iraq to complain to Security Council over Iran's meddling - Shaalan

Al-Sabah Al-Jadid daily, Nov. 3 – Iraqi defense minister Hazim Shaalan again accused Iran. He said security agencies have enough evidence to condemn Iran and to prove Iran's huge role in Iraq's insecurity. He stressed that these documents and evidence will be presented to an impartial international group or the Security Council so that Iran would not be able to get away with it and would have to account for what occurs in Iraq.



Tehran tries to achieve its goals at Iraqi people's expense

Az-Zaman daily, Nov. 4 – Khomeini and Bin Laden divide the booties from Iraq. The Iranian regime wants to guarantee its interests over many complex issues with the US and the interim or elected government of Iraq by resorting to terrorist operations in Iraq. The status of the PMOI tops these issues and the presence of US Forces in Iraq and the US stance on the regime's nuclear programs are also among the issues the Iranian regime tries to obtain guarantees for, at the expense of the Iraqi people and with the blood of Iraqi citizens.



Iran thrives on instability in Iraq – prominent Iraqi sheikh

Al-Ahali weekly, Nov. 3, Iraq - Sheikh Hussein Shaalan, president of the Iraqi tribes and Sheikhs Council in an interview with Al-Ahali daily said: "The Iranian regime makes the most interference in the Iraqi internal affairs."

When asked about relations with the neighboring countries which interfere in Iraq and make it insecure, Shaalan said: "Let me be clear. The Iranian regime makes the most interference in the affairs of Iraq. I am not relying on accusations but on realities in making these comments. This is something the government of Iraq has announced. The Ministers of Defense and Interior have publicly declared that Iran's ruling regime sabotages Iraq and makes all kinds of interferences. This is done by helping the mercenaries in Iraq and by sending terrorist groups and some times by influencing the policies... Sheik Hussein Shaalan also said: "Stability and security in Iraq is tantamount to the end of the Iranian regime's rule. This is why it destabilizes Iraq to try to preserve its own rule."

Iraq FM confirms Iranian interference in Iraq

Al-Iraqiya Television, Nov. 1 – [Iraqi foreign minister] Hoshiyar Zebari told the Iraqi Parliament, "...The Iranian consul visited me today. I told him (with laughter) that I am not speaking with a diplomat; I am speaking with a combatant. Indeed, there is interference on the part of Iran and every one knows that."



Iran behind 18 assassinations and rebels in Fallujah- Ghazi al-Yawar

AFP, Nov. 1, Kuwait City - Iraqi President Ghazi al-Yawar accused Iran of orchestrating attacks in his country and declared his opposition to a threatened assault on the rebel hotbed of Fallujah, in an interview published Monday.

"Iran is playing a negative role in Iraq. It is behind the assassination of more than 18 Iraqi intelligence officers. It is also playing a negative role in southern Iraq," Yawar told Kuwait's Al-Qabas newspaper.



Border forces capture 94 infiltrators crossing from Iran

Associated Press, Oct. 31, Basra - A military commander says Iraq's border forces have arrested 94 infiltrators who illegally crossed into the country from Iran.

The Iraqi Brigadier General in charge of the southern borders says the infiltrators, all Afghans and Iranians, were arrested yesterday crossing into southern Basra and Amarah. The general says most of them had no travel documents and the rest didn't have proper ones. U.S. officials have raised constant concerns about the country's porous border, saying foreign fighters from surrounding nations are flooding into Iraq to join the insurgency.



Iranian military rhetoric reflects outside pressures

Radio Free Europe, Nov. 1, Alex Vatanka - The commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corp (IRGC), Brigadier General Yahya Rahim Safavi, said on 8 October that U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq are merely the foundations of an expansionist U.S. military strategy to subdue the entire Middle East, the Iranian Student News Agency (ISNA) reported.

Safavi added: "If this strategy fails heavily in Iraq, it will, undoubtedly, stop. Otherwise it may extend to neighboring countries."

This line of thinking reflects Iran's fear that it is the next candidate for regime change in the context of the White House's "axis of evil," and it explains regime hard-liners' efforts to undermine U.S. objectives in Iraq...

Alex Vatanka is an analyst at Jane's Information Group.

UN General Assembly to vote on Iran resolution



Voice of America, Nov. 3 - Canada presented a draft resolution to the United Nations following the annual meetings of the UN General Assembly's Third Committee. According to observers, the resolution will probably be adopted by the end of this month...

The Canadian government's draft resolution submitted to the UN human rights commission called for the banning of torture in Iran.



Gender equality is "tyranny against men", Iranian MP claims

AFP, Oct 31, Tebran -- An Iranian woman lawmaker is backing the removal of the concept of gender equality from a state development plan in order to prevent the "bullying" of men, the state news agency IRNA reported yesterday.

"Bringing up the issue of gender justice is a case of bullying men," the female deputy, Eshrat Shayeghi told the agency. She said she was supporting a decision by the conservative-dominated parliament to delete a phrase in the 'Fourth Five-Year Development Plan' (2005-2010), which aimed at considering equal training and employment opportunities for women as men.

"If men are in the habit of beating, women are guilty of talking back," Shayeghi said.

"If the gender justice is brought up, men can object to payment of the household expenses (*nafagheh*) – given under Islamic law to housewives – as a sort of abuse and violence against men."

Out of 11 female MPs in the current parliament, only one had spoken out against the removal of the phrase, IRNA reported. Iranian women face a number of legal restrictions in Iran's male-dominated society.

They receive half of the inheritance and blood money given to men, and they are also not allowed to be court judges. If they are married, a woman needs her husband's permission to travel abroad.



200 children in Khorassan suffering from AIDS

Iran Focus, Oct. 29 - The head of medical branch of the ministry of education in the Iranian province of Khorassan announced that at least two hundred school children are suffering from the AIDS epidemic according to the latest figures. He said that the government has not been active in combating the disease and that many

students don't even know what it is.

Mashad's 1,000 blind in desperate state

Iran Focus, Oct. 29 - At present there are at least one thousand blind people in and around the suburbs of Mashad. Iranian officials announced that 600 of these individuals are in the city and the rest are in the surrounding villages. They are suffering due to lack of care by government institutions. It was reported that many of these individuals do not have homes or families to look after them.



Crackdown on free speech

Radio Farda, Oct. 29 - Iran court has transferred Payman Piran, a political prisoner in Evin prison to the smugglers ward to place more pressure on him.

Pejman Piran, Payman's brother said, "Payman was sent to solitary confinement and later to ward eight. Evin prison's ward eight is for smugglers."

He also said his father is in detention and in twenty days, he will be sentenced for acting against national security and insulting Khamenei.

RSF deplors crackdown on press

Reporters Without Borders, Oct. 29 - Reporters Without Borders today deplored the arrest of Iranian journalist Fereshteh Ghazi, of the daily Etemad ("Confidence"), for working with reformist Internet news websites and expressed alarm at reports that the intelligence services were preparing to accuse her and five other imprisoned journalists of "adultery" in a bid to hide the political nature of their detention.

More than 150 demonstrations in one month

Iran Press News, Oct. 29 - More than 150 riots were organized by people of various social classes, around Iran. Cities like Tehran, Isfahan, Sabzehvaar, Birjand, Miaandowaab, Karadj, Khorramabad, Torbat-jaam, Rasht, Hamadan, Orumi'yeh, Maybod, Bojnourd, Mashhad, Zanjaan, Baabol, Qom and many more.

Knowledgeable and active students organized sit-ins and demonstrations in 60 of said cases...

The country's destitute workers, in 37 cases of sit-ins and protests were the second highest active group, after the students...



Other groups such as nurses, teachers and high school students were also among the protesting groups. In light of the non-stop executions at the hand of the Mullah regime, protests proliferated and increased all around the country. During the one month period between September 15th and October 15th, 36 people (that are known of) have been executed. These executions were specifically designed to intimidate and scare the already exasperated citizens.

News Analyses

Appeasement of mullahs, dangerous and ineffectual



US Alliance for Democratic Iran (USADI) weekly commentary, Oct. 28 - The European Union's blatant appeasement of the terrorist regime ruling Iran is deplorable and the nuclear

"grand bargain" it has offered Tehran could very well have strategic and regional security repercussions... Increasingly confident in light of the EU's stance, Tehran has hardened its position in the nuclear brinkmanship it has waged on the world and in recent weeks it has announced the operation of new nuclear-related facilities. Now, Tehran appears to be in the driver's seat. As such, EU's reckless approach has bolstered Iran's nuclear arms program.

The Washington-based Nonproliferation Policy Education Center (NPEC) warned this week that the nuclear technology the EU has offered Iran could indeed help it make an atomic bomb, not prevent it. The EU's appeasement of an innately outlaw regime will not defuse the serious nuclear threat posed by Iran. It would also have catastrophic consequences for U.S. security and regional stability by unwittingly facilitating Tehran's nuclear drive.

Engagement is an inherently dangerous policy when it comes to dealing with terrorist, totalitarian states like Iran for it would encourage them to continue their behavior and demand even more concessions when they see their outlaw conduct is economically and politically rewarded...

Intrinsically and structurally incapable of real change, the mullahs' regime lacks long-term stability and legitimacy. Ensuring its permanence has been the driving force of its domestic and foreign policy since coming to power in 1979.

Contrary to the contention of Tehran's apologists in the EU, Iran's two-decade long nuclear drive is not a part of a defensive doctrine to deal with a "dangerous neighborhood" or "legitimate security concerns" in the aftermath of the Iraq war. It is a core component of Tehran's strategy of survival and expanding its fundamentalist Islam elsewhere. It stems from the depraved and rogue nature of the regime.

As quoted in the Middle East Defense News of July 22, 1991, Iran's powerful former president, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, told a gathering of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps in October 6, 1988, that, "We should fully equip ourselves both in the offensive and defensive use of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapon. From now on, you should make use of the opportunity and perform this task."

No doubt Iran represents a clear and present danger to world's peace and security. The ever-shrewd Europeans may have their commercial or geopolitical interests in mind for not wanting to break their bridges with the mullahs. However, the specter of a nuclear-armed Iran "the most active state sponsor of terrorism" is far too ominous to let appeasers in the EU formulate policy toward Tehran.

It all started in Tehran

Arab New, Oct. 30 - The embassy seizure showed that Americans were no longer safe outside their homeland and that even diplomatic immunity would not protect them. The 9/11 attacks showed that the Americans were no longer safe even in their own homeland, and that no amount of military clout could protect them against enemies that recognized no bounds.

In a sense the Nov. 4, 1979 attack on the US Embassy in Tehran could be regarded as the opening scene of a long drama that reached its catharsis on Sept. 11, 2001.

The 1979 embassy attack came at a time that the administration of President Jimmy Carter was trying to prop up the new Khomeinist regime in Tehran....

According to his son Ahmad, who had been asked to coordinate with the embassy-raiders, the ayatollah feared “thunder and lightning” from Washington. But what came, instead, was a series of bland statements by Carter and his aides pleading for the release of the hostages on humanitarian ground... For 22 years the United States, under presidents from both parties, behaved in exactly the way that Khomeini predicted. It took countless successive blows, including the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York, without decisive retaliation. That attitude invited, indeed encouraged, more attacks. The 9/11 tragedy was the denouement of the Nov. 4 attack on the US Embassy in Tehran.



Militant Muslim fundamentalism rooted in Iran, greatest world threat

USA Today, Oct. 25 - On a Sunday morning 25 years ago, U.S. diplomats in Tehran looked out the window to see hundreds of young Iranians, fired by a love of Islam and a hatred of America, spilling over the walls and through the gate of the embassy compound. The Americans did not know it, but they were staring at the future - a type of militant Muslim fundamentalism that would one day replace communism as the greatest threat to their nation. That was Nov. 4, 1979, the beginning of the Iran hostage crisis, and a date on a timeline that would stretch to Sept. 11, 2001, and beyond. Fifty-two Americans were held captive for 444 days. Although none was seriously hurt, many were beaten, blindfolded, isolated and lined up for mock firing squads. Never had so many representatives of so powerful a nation been abused so flagrantly... What was shocking in 1979 has now become routine. New group of extremists - this time in Iraq - almost daily takes hostages, makes threats and demands concessions. And though the circumstances are vastly different than in Iran 25 years ago, the plan is the same: Invoke Islam to crush America.