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PERES WARNS: ONE MORNING WE'LL WAKE TO A NUCLEAR IRAN

December 5, 2007 YnetNews.com reported: "According to President Shimon Peres, historically, intelligence reports sometimes turn out to be inaccurate, but on the Iranian issue the international community must eschew compromise and focus on a few clear warning signs. Peres thus spoke during a meeting with former American Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who is visiting Israel. He warned that whenever Iran develops a successful civilian nuclear energy program, the transition to developing nuclear weapons will be quick and easy.

Furthermore, Peres warned that it was impossible for any intelligence agency to know the exact nature and scope of the technological knowledge purchased from North Korea and Russia at high prices. "We are likely to wake up one morning and discover that comprehensive nuclear technology was passed on without interruption and is close to implementation," he said.

The President spoke with Albright regarding Israeli fears of Iranian investment in developing long-range ballistic missiles capable of hitting targets in Europe. Peres said that Iran has no justification for building these conventional missiles, hides its intentions and activities, and feeds the international community nothing more than crumbs of information.

Peres indicated that he was concerned by remarks made by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, pointing to the extremist leader's declared intention to destroy Israel and sow destruction upon the democratic world. The President concluded by saying that the international community must not cease its efforts against Ahmadinejad and the Iranian nuclear weapons program."..."

IRAN PRESIDENT HAILS NUCLEAR REPORT AS 'VICTORY'

December 6, 2007 The London Daily Telegraph reported: "Iran's president has claimed "victory" after America's intelligence agencies reported that Teheran has halted a nuclear weapons programme. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad claimed that Washington's latest National Intelligence Estimate showed that all claims that Iran posed a threat were "lies".

This comes at a crucial moment when America, Britain and France are trying to persuade the United Nations Security Council to pass another Resolution imposing new economic sanctions on Iran.

Mr Ahmadinejad's regime is still enriching uranium inside an underground nuclear plant in Natanz in defiance of three earlier UN Resolutions. This highly sensitive procedure could be used to make the essential material for a nuclear weapon.

But Mr Ahmadinejad believes that America's spies have taken the pressure away from Iran and removed any chance of more sanctions being imposed.

"This is a declaration of victory for the Iranian nation against the world powers over the nuclear issue," he said while addressing a rally in Ilam province.

The president added: "This was a final shot to those who, in the past several years, spread a sense of threat and concern in the world through lies of nuclear weapons. Thanks to your resistance, a fatal shot was fired at the dreams of ill-wishers and the truthfulness of the Iranian nation was once again proved by the ill-wishers themselves."..."

IDF TO PRESENT IRANIAN NUCLEAR EVIDENCE TO US MILITARY CHIEF

December 7, 2007 The Jerusalem Post reported: "Disappointed after failing to make their case on Iran and influence the outcome of the United States's National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) released this week, Military Intelligence will present its hard core evidence on the Islamic Republic's nuclear program on Sunday to the chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff during a rare visit he will be making to Israel.

Admiral Michael Mullen will land in Israel Sunday morning for a 24-hour visit that will include a one-on-one meeting with IDF Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi, as well as with Defense Minister Ehud Barak.

According to a *Time* magazine article published Wednesday, Mullen is a member of the Pentagon's "anti-war [with Iran] group" that includes Defense Secretary Robert Gates and Admiral William Fallon, current commander of the US Central Command.

In a recent press briefing in Washington, however, Mullen took a hard-line approach, refusing to rule out the possibility that military force will be used to stop Iran's race towards nuclear power.

"I would never take the military option off the table," Mullen told reporters, although he stressed that his remark did not mean that force would be used. Diplomacy, he added, was very important.

Mullen's visit to Israel will be exactly a week after the publication of the NIE report that claimed Iran had frozen its nuclear military program in 2003 and has yet to restart it. During his visit, Military Intelligence plans to present him with Israel's evidence that Iran is in fact developing nuclear weapons.

"The report clearly shows that we did not succeed in making our case over the past year in the run-up to this report," a defense official said Thursday. "Mullen's visit is an opportunity to try and fix that."

In addition to Iran, Ashkenazi and his staff will also discuss with Mullen America's commitment for Israel to retain its qualitative edge in the face of the sale of advanced JDAM missiles to Saudi Arabia.

In the past, Israel had asked the Pentagon to permit the sale of the F-22 fifth-generation stealth fighter jet - also known as the Raptor - but the request was rejected.”...”

IRAN'S PRESIDENT CALLS FOR SECURITY PACT WITH GULF ARAB STATES

December 4, 2007 The Voice of America News reported: “Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has called for economic and security cooperation deals between the states bordering the Persian Gulf. He was addressing the annual summit of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Qatar. It is the first time an Iranian leader has ever attended the GCC summit. VOA Correspondent Challiss McDonough has more from our Middle East bureau in Cairo.

Mr. Ahmadinejad told the leaders of the six Persian Gulf states meeting in Doha that any security problem affecting one of their nations will hurt all of the others. He urged the establishment of economic and security pacts between the Gulf states. Speaking in Persian through an Arabic translator, he said the security of all the Gulf countries is inextricably linked.

Iran has previously called for Gulf security pacts, but the Gulf Arab states have generally ignored or rejected those appeals. Iran has had a rocky relationship with some of the Gulf Arab nations, including several territorial disputes, and several of the GCC leaders have expressed their discomfort with Iran's nuclear program. But in his remarks at the GCC summit, Mr. Ahmadinejad was clearly reaching out to them.

He said Iran is eager to cooperate closely with its neighbors. He called for peace and security "without foreign interference."

The GCC states have close ties with the United States, which has a cool relationship with Iran. Several of them, including Qatar and Bahrain, host U.S. military bases. But several of the GCC members also have long-standing cultural and economic ties with Iran. They have felt caught in the middle of the standoff over Iran's nuclear program.

Officials said this was the first time that an Iranian leader had been invited to a GCC summit in the organization's 27-year history.

The Gulf Cooperation Council is a six-nation grouping of Arab states whose aim is to promote economic cooperation between members and, through collective security, guard against any threat from neighboring states.

Mr. Ahmadinejad spoke to the summit just after its host, the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani,

Sheikh Hamad told the assembled leaders they were meeting amid what he called "a very dangerous atmosphere" that threatens the region and the world. The emir listed a series of crises that he said are increasing pressure on the region, threatening its stability. The standoff over the Iranian nuclear program was first on his list, followed by the buildup of military forces in the Gulf.

The Gulf leaders were meeting on the same day that the U.S. intelligence agencies revised their assessment of Iran's nuclear weapons program. The agencies concluded that Iran stopped trying to build nuclear weapons in 2003, although they believe Iran is likely still keeping its options open. The agencies said Iran has been more responsive to sanctions and other forms of international pressure than previously thought. The new intelligence report is seen as a significant shift away from earlier positions, when the U.S. intelligence agencies had taken a harder line on Iran.”

MONITORS DENOUNCE RUSSIA ELECTION

December 3, 2007 BBC News reported: “Foreign observers have said that Russia's parliamentary election, won by President Vladimir Putin's party, was "not fair". The statement was made by a joint observer team of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe.

With nearly all ballots counted, Mr Putin's United Russia had 64.1% of the vote, the electoral commission said. Mr Putin said the poll was "legitimate" and a vote of public trust in him.

The election "was not fair and failed to meet many OSCE and Council of Europe commitments and standards for democratic elections," the observers from the OSCE's Parliamentary Assembly and the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly told a news conference in Moscow.

The statement criticised "abuse of administrative resources" and "media coverage strongly in favour of the ruling party". The polls "took place in an atmosphere which seriously limited political competition" and "there was not a level political playing field", it said.

The OSCE had sent 330 foreign monitors to cover nearly 100,000 polling stations - far fewer than it had originally planned. It has accused Moscow of imposing curbs and delaying monitors' visas. Russia has denied the claims.”...”

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